

The Rock

by Mary P. Hamlin

*A Play in Three Acts
Showing the Character Development
of Simon Peter*



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THE ROCK

*A Play in Three Acts Showing the Character Development
of Simon Peter*

BY

MARY P. HAMLIN

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"He Came Seeing"

"The Trouble with the Christmas Presents"

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SYNOPSIS OF THE ROCK

THE play opens in the courtyard of the house of Andrew and Simon in the great, cosmopolitan city of Capernaum where the four Roman roads cross and go out to the known world. In the first act, Simon, a poor young fisherman, pours out to his little wife, Adina, his ambition to become a great merchant. He believes in his dream and he believes in himself, but neither one can see any opening in their environment of poverty. Uncle Ucal arrives; with him opportunity. He is a rich merchant and he offers to establish Simon in business. In the meantime, however, Simon has been fired by enthusiasm for a strange teacher from Nazareth to see visions of a far greater future than that of a merchant. He sees in Jesus a leader of the Nation and when the Master calls him to his service, he throws aside Ucal's offer, and the ambition of yesterday, and flings himself into the cause of the Nazarene. His mother-in-law, Ucal and the brilliant and wicked Magdala all oppose him, but the little Adina stands loyally by his decision.

Believing in his own strength, Simon accepts the name of Peter, the Rock, with calm assurance and, in the second act, is flung from the heights of hope and enthusiasm to the depths of disillusionment and fury when the Nazarene refuses to take advantage of the chance for leadership which the healing of Peter's mother-in-law and the miracles following have opened to him. When Jesus turns his back on the waiting multitude in Capernaum, refusing to leave his mountain solitude, Peter deserts him in anger. At home he finds his little wife and her mother unalterably loyal to the Master and Magdala, discontented with her way of life, beginning to feel stirrings of curiosity about the new Teacher, but it is the I-told-you-so attitude of Ucal that swings him back to his old loyalty to Jesus and brings him to the realization that though the Master is weak in worldly wisdom, he is still a great man and, because of his weakness, needs his strength to support him. With redoubled enthusiasm, he sees himself the Rock that shall support the Master's kingdom.

The third act is laid on a house-top in Bethany, the evening of the crucifixion. The death of their leader has come as a crushing blow to all, but to Peter it is not only the end of hope but the discovery of himself

as a coward and a traitor. He suffers as only the egoist can suffer when his self-love dies, but, at last, through the devotion of Adina and the understanding of Magdala, he begins to vision faintly the true meaning of his name.

The play as a whole is an attempt to answer the age-old question: "Shall man succeed in that he seem to fail?"

CHARACTERS

Simon (Sī'-mon), a fisherman

Adina (A - dē' - na), his wife

Deborah (Děb' - o - rah), her mother

Ucal (Ū' - cal), her uncle

Mary of Magdala (Măg' - da - la)

Pandira (Păn' - di - ra), a Greek

Titus (Tī' - tus), a Roman officer

Agur (Ā' - gur), a physician

Servant to Ucal

Servant to Agur

Servant to Magdala

Suggestions regarding costumes and scenery will be found on page 56.

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THE ROCK

ACT ONE

COURTYARD IN THE HOUSE OF SIMON

The floor is of flagstones. Upstage, L, is a rude gate leading to the street. L, center, is an olive tree, spreading and old. About the trunk are built some rough stone steps where one may sit. Against the wall R, goes up a rude stone staircase to rooms above. The under part of staircase is a rude stone arch. At foot of stairs, extreme R, a door leads into house. In the wall, going up the stairway, are deep slits forming narrow barred windows. On the stairway stand a few copper jars and other antique and curiously shaped utensils. Along the wall, L, runs a rough wooden rack in which are six water-jars of dull red pottery.

As the curtain goes up, enter ADINA by the gate upstage L. She is a pretty, slender young Hebrew girl with the face and carriage of a child. She wears the white head-dress, or veil, of the Jewish woman, over which is a long mantle of sand-color with a wide border of deep blue, edged with fringe. About her forehead is a band made of beads. She wears sandals and anklets of glass. Her dress is pretty and gay but does not suggest elegance. She carries a water-jar on her head. She crosses with the sturdy step of youth, but shows that the jar is heavy. She starts to ascend stairway. Enter, through door R, SIMON. He is young, alert, athletic and very handsome. He wears the short undergarment of the Jew with his breeches tucked up, or "girt," showing a long bare leg. On his feet are sandals. He carries a great fish-net made of cords. His manner is gay and his walk vigorous. His whole bearing is one of impetuosity and enthusiasm.
Simon (looking up at Adina): Little wife, how many more jars must thou fetch?

Adina (pointing to jars in rack): Six more, thou seest, my Simon.

Simon (frowning): Bah! That I had slaves to do this work for thee, Adina.

Adina (*standing with jar poised on head and laughing*): Oh, I mind it not. No slave women have ever borne *my* water-jars from the well. (*Her face becomes anxious.*) Thou art not going in the boat today? Thou wast fishing all the night.

Simon: Aye, and caught nothing. (*He sighs.*) No, we will wash the nets today and perchance cast from the shore. This one needeth mending.

Adina (*hurrying up the stairway*): I will help thee. Let me set down my jar.

(*Simon stands looking lovingly after her. She places jar carefully on floor at top of stairs and then comes running lightly down.*)

Simon (*holding out his arms to her*): Thou art all fair, my love. There is no spot in thee.

Adina (*stopping on next to bottom step and placing right hand on forehead*): O my husband, with my head I worship, (*fingers on lip*) with my lips I honor thee, and (*hand on heart*) with my heart I love thee.

(*She speaks with grave dignity, then dances laughingly into his arms like a happy child. Simon kisses her on head and cheeks, then they kneel together and begin to untangle and tie the cords of the net.*)

Simon: Little dove, thou art very precious to me.

Adina (*adoring him*): And thou to me, my husband, thou art so brave. (*Simon throws back his shoulders in proud assent, then his shoulders slump forward and he begins to work again, frowning.*)

Simon: Brave? Bah! To let a little thing like thou art, and of a noble house, bear water from the public well like a slave girl! O Adina, how I long to be able to place thee where thy birth entitles thee to be, to have slave women to wait upon thee, to have jewels, real jewels, not those glass things, about thy ankles—those *little* ankles of thine. (*He stoops and takes her foot in his hand.*) “How beautiful are thy feet in sandals, O prince’s daughter!” (*He is about to kiss her ankles.*)

Adina (*snatching back her feet with a laugh*): Thou shalt not kiss Adina’s feet. Thou art my lord and master, Simon, and I am thy slave.

Simon (*looking at her gravely*): Thou art my wife and thou art of royal lineage.

Adina (*sighing impatiently and tying knots vigorously*): Aye, so my mother saith, but poverty is the only lineage I have ever known, and

I tell thee, Simon, it is a blessed thing for me and my mother that we have two strong fishermen like thee and the good Andrew to stand between us and hunger. (*She nods her little head wisely.*)

Simon: Yet thou art of the house of—

Adina (*quickly*): I am of the house of Simon, my husband. (*She thrusts her face up at him saucily and he kisses her.*)

Simon: Thy mother wearieth her that thou must carry a water-jar upon thy head.

Adina: My mother remembereth the house of Eleazar, her father, but I have never known aught but the house of poverty, and, as for the water, I love the public well, for there I first saw thee, my Simon.

Simon: Ah! How we used to whisper there in the twilight.

Adina: Dost remember the night thou madest me give thee my water-jar to carry? (*She rocks back and forth on her ankles, laughing.*)

Simon: It was dark.

Adina: Aye, but if any one had *seen* thee! A man carrying a water-jar upon his head! (*She laughs teasingly.*) Oh, how strange and funny thou didst look!

Simon (*gravely*): It was my love for thee. I was mad and reckless with love.

Adina: Thou must have been.

Simon (*tenderly*): And so am I yet. If thou dost say the word, I will carry thy jars this morning, and I care not who seeth me. (*He speaks with a fine reckless daring and starts up as if to get jars.*)

Adina (*pushing him down by shoulder and speaking in shocked voice*): Simon! Dost think I would let thee?

Simon (*head back*): I would do even that for thee, Adina.

Adina: I love thee for it, my Simon, but I would rather die than have thee do it. What would men say?

Simon (*moved*): I care not what men say. I love thee, Adina, I love thee.

Adina: My Simon! Oh, but thou art brave. It was *that* made me love thee, and, oh, Simon, how hard it was for me to keep the love out of my eyes when my mother spake to me of making a contract with thy father for our marriage.

Simon (*smiling*): It was a sore trial to thy good mother when my father asked thy hand for *me* and not, as she had hoped, for his first-born, Andrew.

Adina (*working fast*): Ah, our good Andrew! I love him dearly—as a sister.

Simon: And he loveth his little sister and we both love thy lady-mother, but we be but common fisher-folk.

Adina: Simon, my mother must never suspect that we had spoken together before we were wedded. It would break her heart, but—oh, my husband, I loved thee of my own fancy like a Greek girl.

Simon: Truly the poor have some freedom that the rich may not share. I would not give our secret meetings by Gennesaret for all the slaves that money would surround thee with.

Adina: Nor I. I believe I should hate the secluded life that would be mine if we were rich, Simon. Behind the lattice, where my mother would have me, should I ever have heard Jesus of Nazareth speak?

Simon: Aye, that is worth something! One would give much to hear the Teacher, yet I could wish for more money. (*He sighs and shifts his shoulders.*) Little wife, it is weary work fishing the long night through and catching nothing.

Adina (*cheerily*): Aye, but *sometime* the catch is good, and when it is, thou art clever at the selling, Simon.

Simon: Oh, I can *sell*. It is a gift. Andrew hath it not, yet he is ever more patient at the fishing than I. I weary of the silence and the sea. Adina, I tell thee, I feel within me the power to make men buy what *I* would sell. I know not what it is, but I can sway a man to do my will. I hate the slowness and the loneliness of the fisherman's life. I long to be in the throng of things here in this great city of Capernaum on the Roman roads where all the world goeth by.

Adina (*practically*): Thou dost sell thy fish in the market-place.

Simon: Aye, but I fret at the prices they pay us fisher-folk. We toil in the heat of noonday and in the long dark night, yet it is the man who drieth our fish and selleth to the caravans from Egypt and Damascus and Persia that gaineth wealth by our labor.

Adina: Some day thou shalt be a merchant with thine own driers and *thou* shalt buy from other fishers and shalt sell to all the earth as it passeth through our city. (*She speaks with the calm confidence of the unimaginative.*)

Simon (*with the look of the dreamer in his kindled eye*): Dost truly believe that thy Simon shall ever do this, little dove?

Adina: I *know* thou wilt do it. Thou art brave and thou art clever.

All that is needed is a start. (*She switches the net about capably.*)

Simon (*letting the net slip from his fingers*): Aye, but the start! Where shall I find money to start? Never more than enough for the day's needs! Oh, how I long for a chance, *ever* so small a chance! Adina, I *know* I could make a merchant. (*He springs to his feet as if the belief were too great to bear sitting.*)

Adina (*mending*): I know thou couldst, my Simon.

Simon (*gazing into space, his face alight*): Oft in the night, out on the lake in the silence and the darkness, I see myself a leader of men, a great merchant with many men in my hire—busy, active—with money to make my fisheries ever greater, and to buy *thee* litters and slaves and jewels. Always *I* am in the stream of life, active, alert, powerful, but (*he looks gravely at Adina*) ever *just*, just to the men who labor for me, Adina.

Adina (*screwing lips as she ties a firm knot*): Who doeth the fishing if thou art ever in the market-place?

Simon: Why, Andrew! We should be partners always and I should do the selling and Andrew would direct the fishing. His work would ever be upon the sea and mine—(*his face glows*) in the city, among men whom I should control.

Adina (*like a child who brags*): My uncle Ucal is a merchant.

Simon: Thy mother hath told me of him. He hath booths in the Temple at Jerusalem and selleth to the pilgrims.

Adina (*working*): He is a mighty man of wealth, they say, but it doeth us no good.

Simon (*kneeling to the work again*): Jerusalem is a long way off.

Adina: Twice my mother hath heard through travelers from Jerusalem that my uncle hath in mind a journey to Capernaum.

Simon: I should like really to *know* a merchant—a great merchant like thy mother's brother.

Adina: Perhaps he will come to see us one day.

Simon: He will not like thy being married to a fisherman, Adina.

Adina (*with spirit*): Well, *I* like it. If his desire was for a better alliance, why did he not arrange it?

Simon: He will complain that thy mother did not consult him.

Adina: How could she get word to him? We have never had money to fit out a caravan to send messages, and thou knowest my age, Simon. It were a shame for my mother to allow me to remain longer unwed.

Simon: If he come and speak to thee of a grand alliance, wilt thou have regrets, my little dove?

Adina: *Simon! (She stoops and covers his hands with kisses.)* Thou knowest I love thee only. It was not *I* who sighed for riches. *I* do not fear poverty. *(She ties the last knot with decision.)*

Simon *(taking the net, rising and helping her to her feet):* Nor I, if thou be by my side. *(He gathers up the net and starts upstage, then turns.)* It is not so much *wealth* that I long for as freedom—freedom to work out the plans and ideas that are ever boiling within me. *(He sighs deeply.)*

Adina *(taking a jar from the rack):* Ah, freedom! What is freedom?

Simon *(striding to her and laying his hands on her shoulders he looks into her upturned face):* Freedom is the chance to use the power that leapeth within thy heart. Freedom is to be able to do the work thou longest to do, the work thou *knowest* thou art fitted to do. *(He flings the great net over his shoulder and sighs.)* Always to *do something else!* To toil and weary and never to do the thing thou *canst* do, never do the thing thou *wantest* to do. *That* is slavery. Surely, Adina, there is no freedom there.

Adina *(jar poised on shoulder):* I heard him say the truth maketh free. *(Wistfully.)* What did he mean?

Simon: I did not hear him speak of freedom, but I tell thee, Adina, it is since I have known him and have listened to his talks that I have felt the power so strong within me to *do* things—to conquer—to overcome.

Adina: Aye, I know It is a strange new life and courage he putteth into thee.

Simon: Or *draweth out of thee.* Which is it?

Adina: I do not know. It is wonderful. No one hath ever spoken as he speaketh.

Simon: No one. Farewell, my sweet one. *(He embraces her.)*

Adina: Jehovah bless and prosper thee, my husband.

(Simon goes out gate with net over shoulder. Adina stands looking after him a little sadly. Enter, down stairway, DEBORAH. She is a sweet-looking woman, delicate and refined and somewhat worn-looking.)

Deborah: Hast been to the well, my daughter?

Adina (*turning with a quick, cheerful smile*): Once, mother. I tarried to help Simon with the net. I will fetch the other jars now.

Deborah: We shall need many for the purification. (*Adina turns a scowling, rebellious little face front. It is the first time that a frown has been seen upon her dear little face. For a moment she looks like a naughty child, then her face relaxes and she speaks gently.*)

Adina: I know.

Deborah: Didst see any one at the well, child?

Adina: It was early, but the slaves of Magdala were there.

Deborah (*shocked*): Oh! Thou didst not speak with them, Adina?

Adina (*by the gate*): Why, no, I did not, mother, because I knew thou wouldst not have me; but wherefore should I *not* speak to them?

Deborah: Mary of Magdala is an outcast.

Adina: That I know, mother, yet her slaves may be chaste women. Can they help being her slaves?

Deborah (*sighing deeply*): That the daughter of my father's house should mingle with slaves at a public well!

Adina (*with a shrug*): I will get the water for the purification, mother. (*Deborah turns and plods wearily up stairway. Adina swings gate open and is stopped by a male servant who enters.*)

Servant (*haughtily*): Is this the house of Andrew and Simon, the sons of John?

Adina (*standing very straight with jar on head*): It is their house.

Servant (*turning and bowing very low to some one outside*): This is the house, my lord.

(*Enter, through gate, UCAL. He is dressed with great elegance. His tallith has the sacred fringe of great length and is embroidered heavily with gold thread. He is a man in middle life with a gray beard. He is dignified and substantial in appearance and speaks with a pleasant, authoritative intonation.*)

Ucal: I am Ucal of Jerusalem, the brother of Deborah. Summon thy mistress.

Adina (*setting her jar upon the floor and speaking with quiet dignity*): Thou art exceedingly welcome to our humble dwelling and to eat our bread and salt. (*Ucal turns to look at her in surprise.*) I am Adina, thy sister Deborah's daughter and the wife of Simon, the son of John. (*Her girlish pride is so delightfully funny that Ucal smiles.*)

Ucal (*trying to look grave*): Peace to this house. I thought thee a slave girl.

Deborah (*running down stairway*): Ucal!

Ucal (*turning*): Deborah! The Lord prosper thee.

Deborah (*bowing and placing hand on forehead*): With my head I worship, (*finger on lip*) with my lips I honor thee, (*hand on heart*) with my heart I love thee.

(*Ucal goes to her and kisses her upon the forehead.*)

Adina (*with quiet dignity*): I beg thee, uncle, that thou wilt comfort thine heart with a morsel of bread. My husband is from the house, but I pray that thou wilt ennoble us by thy presence. There are straw and provender for thy asses, and there are both bread and wine for thee and thy servants. (*Her head up.*) There is no want of anything.

Ucal (*looking kindly at her*): So thou art the little Adina? Why didst thou have a water-jar upon thy head?

Adina (*with a trace of defiance*): I was about to go to the well.

Ucal (*frowning*): Thou go fetch water? Why dost thou not send thy servant?

Adina: We be fisher-folk, my uncle, and have no servant. (*She crosses and goes into house R.*)

Ucal (*looking after her with concern on face and then turning to Deborah*): Is this indeed true, Deborah?

Deborah (*bowing*): It is true, my brother. (*She lifts her head.*) Yet though we be poor folk yet should we love to acquaint thee with our bread and salt.

Ucal (*with grave courtesy*): I shall be ennobled by the acceptance of thy bread and salt. (*DEBORAH spreads a straw mat upon floor R center, and UCAL seats himself, squatting on his feet. Enter ADINA, carrying an earthen bowl which she places on the floor in front of UCAL. The women kneel behind him. ADINA hands DEBORAH a small round piece of bread, or sop, which DEBORAH ceremoniously hands to UCAL, who dips it in the bowl and scoops something from the contents into his mouth, eating the sop.*)

Ucal (*continued*): There is bread and salt between us. Peace to this house. (*He rises and pushes the bowl from him. DEBORAH and ADINA rise and ADINA takes bowl and carries it into house R.*) It grieveth me, my sister, to know of thy condition. Thy husband did

offend me when he left the blessed mountains of Judea to mingle his fortunes with the heathen here in Galilee.

Deborah (*sighing as she remembers*): I know. (*Head lifted proudly.*)

But if Jehovah had spared my Ophni, the little Adina would not now be the wife of a fisherman.

Ucal: I reproach me, Deborah, that this should have happened through my neglect. It was the remembrance of the damsel that brought me hither. It had occurred to me that the time for her betrothal must be approaching, but I did not dream that the time for the nuptials was at hand.

Deborah: She is sixteen.

Ucal: I come too late. How time hath flown! (*He crosses and seats himself on top stone about olive tree. DEBORAH seats herself at his feet. ADINA enters and stands R, listening.*) On my journey hither, I tarried the night at the house of my old friend Paphus, the son of Jehudah, at Magdala.

Deborah: How beareth he the desertion of Mary Magdala, his wife?

Ucal: Paphus is a proud man, in some ways a hard man, Deborah. We spake not of her. I knew it was a painful subject, yet I cannot but feel that this sorrow is a judgment of Jehovah upon Paphus.

Deborah: How so? Paphus is a Hebrew of the Hebrews and a mighty man of wealth.

Ucal: But ever too greedy of riches. In his desire to advance himself in the treasure of earth he did not hesitate to open his house to Greeks and to the Roman officers who throng this Capernaum and the fortress of the Roman governor at Tiberias.

Deborah: It was a Greek poet by the name of Pandira that seduced her. They live together here in Capernaum, and she consorteth with all the greatest of the Roman officials, going about blazing with jewels, with her litters and her slaves, a shame and a menace to every virtuous damsel of the town.

Ucal (*with a reminiscent sigh*): Ah, she was a garden for beauty! If Paphus had stayed in Jerusalem, shut in by Mount Sion, in the seclusion of the holy city, he might have kept her for himself. Paphus should have tarried in his own land as should Ophni, thy husband. (*He frowns disapprovingly down at Deborah.*) When I emerged from the fastness of the mountains of Judea and came upon the Via Maris, that mighty Roman road with its caravans from the

ends of the earth, and saw here in Capernaum the throngs of Egyptians and Romans and Persians and men from Damascus, suddenly there came upon me a great fear for thee, my sister, and the young damsel, and I hasted me with reproaches that so long I had left thee in this heathen city.

Deborah (*quietly*): We love Capernaum, Ucal, and Adina's husband is a Hebrew, a virtuous man and gifted above his station and calling.

Ucal: So I heard from Paphus. He told me the young man, Simon, hath a quick wit and is clever with his tongue, but he said that the elder brother was the steadier.

Deborah: Aye, that is true, yet doth my heart cleave to the young man Simon, my son-in-law, with a great cleavage.

Ucal (*with courtesy*): My heart burneth within me to know the young man.

Adina (*crossing*): He is by the lake of Gennesaret casting the net. I will get me to the lake and summon him. (*She starts.*)

Ucal (*frowning*): Nay. I like it not that a damsel of our house should run about the town. Stay, child. We will await his coming.
(*ADINA makes a little face front but seats herself upon the floor L.*)

Deborah: What spake Paphus of, if he told thee not of Magdala?

Ucal: Of a mighty magician who is setting men's tongues wagging hereabouts.

Deborah: Aye, Jesus, the son of Joseph.

Ucal: That was the name. Hast heard of him?

Adina (*hugging her knees and speaking like a bragging child*): Aye, Uncle Ucal, we *know* him. He is wonderful.

Ucal (*frowning*): Thou dost know him? How shouldst thou, a virtuous damsel, know a juggler?

Adina (*sitting up*): My uncle, I am the wife of a poor man and I go freely about the streets and into the market-place. With the poor, even the virtuous damsels have freedom. But this Jesus is not a common juggler. He is an Israelite and a teacher of the law.

Ucal: An Israelite? Where from?

Adina (*rocking and hugging knees*): Nazareth.

Ucal (*amused and condescending*): So? What doth *he* teach?

Adina: He telleth us about Jehovah.

Ucal (*shocked*): Jehovah? What can he know about Jehovah? Hath he studied with the scholars?

Adina: Nay, my uncle, but *he knoweth*. I cannot tell thee how.

Ucal (*with a tolerant smile*): From Nazareth, thou sayest? What doth he tell thee of Jehovah?

Adina: He saith that he is a messenger of Jehovah and that if we take heed to his message we shall be free.

Ucal: Free? Why, we be sons of Abraham and have never been in bondage to any man!

Adina: *He* saith we are in bondage.

Ucal (*sternly*): To the Romans?

Adina: Nay—to all sorts of foolish customs like the ceremonial washings of copper dishes and the setting aside of the tenth part of every bit of caraway seed and spice that we use in the cooking. He saith that *men* have loaded us down with these burdens in our household tasks, and that Jehovah doth not care one bit about them.

Ucal (*springing to his feet and snatching a small knife from his girdle*): *This is blasphemy.*

Adina (*springing up and laying her hand on his arm*): Nay, uncle, stay thy hand. Do not rend thy garments. I meant no blasphemy and thy garments are so beautiful. (*Her hand slips down, stroking his tallith with delight at its softness and richness. Her under lip is caught between her teeth as she looks up into his face excited by the touch of such richness.*)

Ucal (*looking at the knife sternly yet reluctantly*): Thou knowest that the law requireth that an Israelite shall rend his garments if blasphemy be spoken in his presence.

Adina (*letting his fringe fall through her fingers with a shudder of delight*): I know, uncle, I have been brought up in the faith. I know that thou carriest that knife for that very purpose. (*She is bragging a bit of her knowledge.*)

Ucal (*kindly*): Then thou art not all heathen?

Adina (*with charming dignity*): Nay, uncle, I know and respect the law of our fathers. Well do I know that it is required of thee that thou cut through all thy garments down to the one next the skin, if thou hear one blaspheme, and I know that the rent must be an hand-breadth (*she holds up her little hand*) in length and it must be from above *downward* toward the fringe, but on no account must thou cut the sacred fringe. (*She is a little set up at knowing so much.*)

Ucal (*looking at knife*): I see thou hast been taught.

Deborah: Put up thy knife, Ucal. The damsel meant no blasphemy.

Adina (*touching his tallith wistfully*): And thy tallith is so wondrous lovely, so heavy with broidery. It may well be that Jehovah taketh no pleasure in seeing it spoilt. It were pity to mar the work. Perchance Jesus is right about freedom.

Ucal (*raising his knife threateningly*): Shall I hear thee prate of freedom like a Greek girl and *not* rend my garments? I tell thee, child, that Jehovah is terrible in his might to avenge himself and drive out of his kingdom all those who dare to blaspheme his name.

Adina: I know, I know, uncle, but put up thy knife. It is not for a woman to question such things, (*wistfully*) yet the Teacher *said* the kingdom of Jehovah is within us.

Ucal (*waving his knife*): What gibberish is this? Jehovah is in the heaven of heavens! Jehovah is *King*.

Adina (*hastily*): Yes, yes, so he *said*, he *said* a king. Put up thy knife, my uncle. I meant no harm. It were pity to cut thy clothing for the words of an ignorant girl and the mending would take so long. You know we have no slaves to do fine needlework.

Ucal (*replacing knife in girdle*): Aye, and I brought no needle-women in my train. (*He turns sternly to Deborah.*) All this cometh, Deborah, of letting the damsel stray about this heathen city at will. A Hebrew maid should be behind her lattice. I shall look into this matter of the Nazarene. Paphus spake of him, but I did not dream that the fellow presumed to be a teacher. We shall soon see what the rulers of the synagogue have to say about him. They will know if he be of the faith. (*Suddenly loud voices and gay laughter are heard outside gate. ADINA springs up in happy excitement. The gate is flung open and a SERVANT enters dressed showily and gorgeously.*)

Servant: My mistress, Mary of Magdala, seeketh admittance.

Ucal (*sternly*): She may not enter here. (*Enter through gate, MARY OF MAGDALA. She is radiantly beautiful, tall and stately with a mature and striking beauty in contrast to the round, childlike sweetness of ADINA. She wears a flame-colored head-dress blazing with jewels, and heavy with embroidery. About her forehead is a band of costly jewels, and she wears anklets of jewels. Her sandals are embroidered and bejeweled. Her bearing is free and confident without being undignified.*)

Magdala: What is this I hear? Who saith that Magdala may not enter this house? There hath been bread and salt between us.

Deborah: Aye, it is true, Ucal. We may not refuse her.

Magdala: *Ucal!!!* Is it thou? The old friend of my old husband, Paphus! (*She laughs recklessly.*) Many's the time that the compact of bread and salt hath been kept by us. (*She turns to gate and waves an invitation.*) Come in. Come in. We are welcome.

(*She laughs in enjoyment of the torture she is inflicting.*)

(*Enter PANDIRA, a handsome, slender Greek, gracefully and beautifully dressed in the Greek fashion. Enter TITUS, a Roman officer, wearing the short coat of mail about the body, the short breeches and high-laced sandals. On his head is a round helmet of bronze and silver. The manner of both men is haughty and slightly insolent.*)

Deborah (*with quiet dignity*): Mary of Magdala, whom seekest thou?

Magdala (*finger lightly lifting the chin of PANDIRA*): This is Pandira, the Greek lad, who is my friend, Deborah—and this—(*she points her elbow saucily at TITUS, who smiles at her in delighted infatuation*) is Titus, a mighty Roman of the household of the august Herod. Be it known to thee that our governor is giving a feast to his officers and would provide amusement for them. He hath heard of thy friend the magician and hath for a long time been desirous of seeing some wonder performed by him. Therefore hath he sent Titus to seek him out and fetch him to the palace that he may show his jugglery at the dinner. I told Titus that ye of this household would know the man's whereabouts.

Adina (*standing up straight and speaking quietly*): Jesus would not do that.

Ucal: Get thee behind thy lattice, girl. Thou shalt not stand there to be stared at by these men. (*ADINA looks for an instant rebellious but, seeing the stern look on UCAL'S face, she turns reluctantly and goes R with a lingering step.*)

Titus (*to Magdala, insolently*): See if the wench knoweth where the fellow is.

Magdala (*for the first time speaking softly*): Dost know where he is, little Adina?

Adina (*coming back quickly and looking at Magdala with something*

like affection): Nay, Magdala, I have not seen him for a day or two, but I *know* he will never do jugglery for Herod.

Titus (*haughtily*): What? A peasant refuse to appear at the palace of Tiberius when he is summoned? Why, it would be the making of him.

Ucal (*to Deborah*): Dost know where the fellow is?

Deborah: Nay, Ucal, I have never seen him.

Ucal (*respectfully to Titus*): Nor I, sir. If we can serve Prince Herod in this, it will do us much honor. It may be that the son-in-law of my sister can find the man for thee.

Titus: Where doth the magician live?

Adina: Here in Capernaum, though I know not where. My husband knoweth, for he hath been at his house.

Titus (*turning on his heel*): Tell thy husband to fetch me word. Meantime we will seek him. (*He looks at MAGDALA.*) Come. (*He goes out gate.*)

(*PANDIRA starts to follow, then sees that MAGDALA is not following. During the last few moments she has been wandering about the rough stones of the arch and the copper utensils as if renewing her acquaintance with a Hebrew dwelling.*)

Pandira (*sharply*): Magdala. (*MAGDALA looks at him with an insolently questioning look. She raises her eyebrows but does not speak.*) Come.

Magdala (*with haughty insolence*): Nay, but it pleaseth me to tarry here for a time.

Pandira (*looking quickly and anxiously out gate*): Magdala! Titus waiteth for thee.

Magdala: Thou mayest tell that haughty Roman, I will not come.

Pandira (*sharply*): Magdala, thou shalt not scorn Titus. Come.

Magdala (*stamping her foot and flying into a rage*): I tell thee it pleaseth me to remain. I tell thee I will not go. (*PANDIRA starts as if to seize her wrist, but UCAL steps quietly between them.*)

Ucal (*with stern dignity*): Cease. Begone. Thou shalt not brawl here in this decent house before virtuous women. (*To PANDIRA*): I tell thee, begone. (*To MAGDALA*): There may have been bread and salt between thee, Mary of Magdala, and this house, but there is no such pact with thy Greek lover and I command thee to depart. (*He points sternly to gate.*)

Magdala (*suddenly cool*): Pandira, dost thou hear? Get thee gone.
I choose to tarry.

Pandira (*with pleading yet exasperated gesture*): Magdala! Titus
——(*UCAL points sternly and PANDIRA, casting a malignant look at MAGDALA, clenching fist as if to strangle her, goes slowly out.*)

Magdala (*lightly touching the stones of arch in stairway*): It is long since I have been within the walls of a virtuous Hebrew dwelling.
(*She sighs.*)

Ucal (*sternly*): Thou well knowest, Mary of Magdala, that thou hast forfeited thy right to virtuous entertainment. Hidden by that flaming head-dress of thine, thy long black hair hangeth loose, unbound by the priest as a symbol that thou art forever outcast from the house of Israel.

Magdala (*deliberately pulling aside her veil and taking a strand of her long hair in her hand and looking at it with interest*): Aye. (*She continues to look at it for a moment, then turns and speaks quietly to the women.*) Shall I go, Deborah, Adina?

Ucal (*pointing*): Go.

Adina (*with a sharp cry*): Nay, uncle, but she shall not go. (*She runs to him and puts her hand on his arm.*) Thou dost not know, but oft when she was yet the wife of Paphus and I was a hungry little child, she fed me with choice food. I was cold and she took me into her house and put warm clothes upon me.

Deborah (*sadly*): Aye, brother, oft in the past hath she thus ministered to our needs.

Ucal (*bowing his head*): I am covered with shame that my neglect should have suffered this to be. Thou hast earned thy right to tarry, woman.

Magdala (*flinging up her head*): Yet why should I care to stay? *I*, who am free of kings' palaces! *I*, who have cast off the slavery of a Hebrew woman's life with its endless tithing of all that cometh into the household, its endless washing of this and that copper pot! (*ADINA takes a few fascinated steps toward her, listening eagerly.*)

Magdala (*continuing*): I go and come as I please and the men of the household of Cæsar are happy if they find favor in my sight. To-night, if thy friend the magician do his wonders before Prince Herod, *I* shall be there in the arms of Titus, the Commander of the Horse.

Ucal: Hush! Thou shalt not babble of thy lewdness here.

Magdala: Nay, good Ucal, I did not mean to speak thus, but I marveled at the sudden longing that came over me to touch again the familiar household things (*she looks wistfully at DEBORAH and ADINA*) and to speak again with a woman of my own race. (*She sighs but quickly recovers herself and flings up her head.*) Ho! I am free! I have thrown off the yoke of bondage. What is there in this poor dwelling that I should tarry here? I am *free, free, free*.

Adina (*coming close and looking up wistfully into her face*): Art thou indeed free, Magdala?

Magdala: Why, yes, child. Look at me. Am I not? I go and come how and where I please. I have slaves and jewels ——

Adina: Yet thy—thy—the Greek, Pandira, didst speak to thee harshly as my Simon never speaketh to me.

Magdala (*with a sudden slumping of her proud carriage*): Thou art right, child, I am not free. I am his slave. Bah! How I loathe him! (*She shudders, burying her head in her hands, but quickly recovers and lifts head proudly.*) Yet would I not return to the old slavery of the Hebrew wife. We are all slaves of one kind or another. *There is no freedom.*

Adina: The Nazarene said the *truth* maketh free.

Magdala (*with sudden interest*): Aye, he said that the day I heard him. I forced my way through the crowd and questioned him about it.

Adina: Oh, I have longed to ask his meaning. Did he answer thee?

Magdala: Aye, he answered me.

Ucal (*with curling lip*): This teacher talked with *thee*?

Magdala: Aye.

Adina: What said he to thee about freedom?

Magdala: He said if I would listen to his message, I should know the truth and the truth would make me free. I told him I was the freest woman in Capernaum. The soldier who was with me laughed and we went our way, but I have *thought* of his words since.

Ucal: If the man were a reputable teacher, he would not have spoken thus publicly with a woman of thy standing, Mary of Magdala.

Adina: He is but newly come to Capernaum. He did not know Magdala. Men say he is a prophet.

Ucal: Nay, child, a prophet would have known what manner of woman it was that spake to him.

(Enter, through gate, SIMON. His face glows with joy and there is a strange, wild excitement and look of power about him. He rushes downstage and stands with head thrown back, a look of ecstasy on his uplifted face.)

Simon: Adina! Mother! He hath called me. The Master hath called me.

(ADINA and DEBORAH press forward on either side, excited by his excitement. UCAL and MAGDALA stand a little back and UCAL is seen to study SIMON with interest. SIMON is so full of his news that he fails to notice UCAL.)

Adina: Simon?

Simon: It was by the lake, Adina. We were washing our nets, Andrew and I, weary with our profitless night. Thou knowest, Adina, how despair was in my heart for the poor catch and the waste of my days.

Adina (breathless): Aye, aye.

Simon: I began to cast the net, though I had no hope. That is the terrible thing about having but one boat. When we are away in the middle of the sea the fish come by the shore, as thou knowest they do come here in Gennesaret, and are to be had for the casting; and yet, when we return empty from the deep fishing, then there are no longer fish by the shore. (ADINA nods in sympathy.)

But I cast the net and then I saw *him*. There was a great crowd following him and pressing upon him and he asked me to let him get into our boat and push out a little way from the shore so that the people should not crush him. We rowed him out and he spake to them from the boat. Oh, Adina, that I could but tell thee *how* he spake! It was so wondrous beautiful what he said. I tell thee, little wife, he spake as never man spake. And when he finished he turned and thanked me for the use of the boat and told me to cast my net onto the right side. I did as he bade and in an instant the net was so full of fish that we were nearly overturned. Andrew and I shouted and the sons of Zebedee came to our rescue. It was all the four of us could do to get the fish into the two boats. Both were filled and, in the end, the great net brake.

Adina (clapping her hands): Simon!

Simon (smiling at her): Oh, we had fish to sell today, my Adina, but that was not all. I was terrified and threw myself at his feet crying, "Master, depart from me, for I am a sinful man!" Then, O little

dove, then he looked at me as no man hath ever looked—as if he saw the inmost longing of my soul, and he said: “From today, thou shalt catch *men*. Follow me.” And, oh, Adina, there welled up within me a great tide of joy and power and I knew, at last, I was *free*.

(For an instant SIMON and ADINA stand gazing into one another's eyes, oblivious of everything except the great thing that has happened. All feel the tension. DEBORAH breaks it.)

Deborah: Simon, thou dost not see. My brother Ucal is here.

Simon *(turning bewildered, but quickly coming to himself and stretching out arms in Oriental welcome)*: Thou art very welcome to my humble dwelling, O uncle of my wife. My house is ennobled of thy presence. *(They kiss one another on both cheeks.)* I beg thee that thou wilt excuse my inhospitable conduct, but this thing that hath happened is beyond all hope and experience of my life.

Ucal: I am ennobled of thy greeting, Simon, son of John, and I will hear further of this thy strange adventure.

Simon: Come, seat thyself, good uncle. *(He points to steps about tree. UCAL seats himself at top, holds out hand to DEBORAH, who mounts and sits beside him. SIMON stretches out hand to MAGDALA.)* Wilt thou be seated, Magdala? *(He indicates lower step.)*

Magdala: Nay, Simon, I will sit here. *(She squats on floor L.)* I too would hear of thy adventure.

Simon: Adina? *(He indicates steps. She looks, hesitates, then goes and sits on floor by MAGDALA. From time to time she reaches out a hand and touches MAGDALA'S rich clothing like a child who loves beauty. SIMON stands with one foot resting on lowest step.)*

Ucal: What thinkest thou the man meant by telling thee that thou shouldst catch men?

Simon: Sir, I believe the Teacher knew the desire that hath long burned like a fierce flame within my breast.

Ucal *(kindly)*: What desire is that, Simon?

Simon: It is a desire that I have ever kept hidden in my heart, O Ucal, a desire that only Adina, my wife, hath ever heard pass my lips.

Ucal: Tell me of thy desire.

Simon: Thou art a mighty man of wealth, O Ucal, and it is not for such as thou art to understand the binding cords of poverty nor the hopeless drudgery of the fisherman's life. Through the long nights we

toil and in the burning heat of day, and other men make profit by our labor.

Ucal: How is that? Dost thou not sell thy fish in the open market?

Simon: Aye, but to whom? To the merchants who dry them and in turn sell them at a great advance in price to the caravans who pass Capernaum over the roads of the Romans to the uttermost bounds of the kingdoms of earth.

Ucal: Ah, I see! And thou wouldst be a drier of fish and a great merchant?

Simon: Aye, sir.

Ucal: There is naught in that desire that should shame thee to tell the whole world. Such an ambition doth but ennoble thee, Simon. I am a merchant and it hath ever been an honorable calling among our people.

Simon: And yet it is so, O Ucal, that a man ever shameth himself to tell abroad the desire that he seeth no hope of ever seeing fulfilled.

Ucal: So now thou thinkest thy wish is about to be carried out? Dost think this Nazarene will set thee up in business?

Simon: Nay, sir, thou dost not understand. Ever since boyhood, I have felt within me the gift to stir men's hearts, and often as a lad the others would gather about me to listen to my words. And now, in the selling, always I get the highest price, for men take heed to me and I move them. It was what I knew I had within me which made me long to be where men are, where I could sway them to my will. Oh, the plans, the plans, the plans that I have had!

Ucal (*watching him with kindly interest*): Tell me thy plans, Simon.

Simon (*recalling his dreams, his face glowing*): As the caravans come into Capernaum, O Ucal, they are often spent with the long journey and sometimes entirely without food if they have not provisioned themselves sufficiently, or if the fierce heat of the desert hath spoiled what they have. Oft they have been days without anything to eat and then they buy with eagerness our fresh fish, but, when they set forth again on their journey, they buy only the dried fish that will keep sweet in the desert sun.

Ucal: Oft have I seen dried fish from the Sea of Galilee in the small caravans that come to Jerusalem, though we be off the great roads of the Romans where the business of the world is.

Simon: Aye, the fish from Gennesaret go to the uttermost parts of the earth.

Ucal: So thou wouldst have a part in feeding the world, Simon?

Simon: Aye, sir, if a man had asses and could send the fish out over the four Roman roads that pass through this city, if he could *meet* the caravans perchance three days' journey from the city, he could sell his merchandise at a great advance in price, for when a man is an hungered, he will pay much for food.

Ucal (*laughing with delight at his shrewdness*): So, thou wouldst get the advantage of the other merchants by selling to the caravans before they reach the market-place! On my honor, thou hast a clever wit, Simon. Thy plan is a good one and could be made profitable.

Simon: Aye, if a man had money to buy asses and hire servants, and do his own drying.

Ucal (*rising and coming down steps*): Simon, son of John, we are well met. I did purpose in my heart to esteem thee for the damsel's sake, but now do I love thee for thyself. Thou art the husband of the daughter of my only sister Deborah and thou hast found favor in my sight. (*SIMON bows low and the women look impressed and delighted.*) For many years Jehovah hath blessed me and I have laid up for myself great treasure in Jerusalem. For a score of years, I have purchased from my old friend Annas the right to set up my booths within the Temple courts and there have I sold animals and doves for the sacrifice. Other booths I have, outside the holy Temple, but the Temple trade hath ever been the best for profit.

Adina: How is that, my uncle?

Ucal: Why, child, men will pay a higher price for the sacrificial lamb bought within the sacred Temple courts. It seemeth more holy and a more acceptable sacrifice to Jehovah if purchased there.

Adina: *Is* it better, uncle?

Ucal (*at a sudden loss*): Why—well—er—*surely* it is for a man's convenience if he buy near the altar of sacrifice and need not bear with him for a distance. (*ADINA looks a bit doubtful.*) But my friend Annas hath ever charged a high price for the rental, and year by year, as his age hath increased, his heart hath grown hard and he hath increased to me the cost of my rents. When we came to make our covenant together at the last Passover season, he demanded of me a price out of all hope of a fair return in profit. Then I bound

myself by an oath that not one shekel more of *my* treasure should ever go into his coffers. I have kept that oath and other merchants now sell where my booths were wont to stand. As I said, I came here to Capernaum to seek out my sister Deborah, but I also had in view the discovering for myself a new manner of merchandising. And now, behold! My pious thought for the only daughter of Eleazar, my father, hath found favor in the sight of Jehovah and he hath set before me this excellent young man who shall minister to my needs. (*He lays his hand impressively on SIMON'S shoulder.*) Simon, son of John, the desire of thy heart shall come to thee. I will set me up as a merchant of fish and thou and thy brother Andrew will I put over the household of my merchandising and thou shalt have power and wealth to put into action thy shrewd and most excellent plan. Thou shalt become a mighty merchant in this great city. My eyes are opened and I see that opportunities for gain abound exceedingly here in Capernaum above that of our sacred Jerusalem.

Adina (*who has half risen, now kneeling and kissing her uncle's hand*): Uncle Ucal, this is like a dream come true.

Deborah (*kissing his hands*): Now doth my heart rejoice that my daughter shall be lifted up to the place of her fathers.

Ucal (*laying his hand affectionately on Adina's head*): Ah, little niece, thou shalt have thy litters and thy slaves. No longer shalt thou fetch water upon thy head from the public well.

Magdala (*rising and speaking in a quiet voice*): Truly, Ucal, thou art a just man and I rejoice that this household shouldst have the blessing of thy favor. Peace be unto thee.

(*All this time, SIMON has stood staring off into space as if some other sight met his gaze.*)

Adina (*running to SIMON and clasping his hand*): O my Simon, the heart of thy little dove aboundeth with gladness that Jehovah hath thus made thy dream come true. (*She pulls herself back, swinging herself, hanging onto his hand with both hers in gay abandon.*) Thou, Simon, a merchant!!! (*She throws back her head in mocking pride, then suddenly becomes aware of his abstraction.*) Simon! Hast thou naught to say to my uncle Ucal for this his great favor to thee?

(*SIMON turns and takes a long look at her and then slowly goes to UCAL and kisses him on both cheeks.*)

Simon (*voice strangely quiet*): O Ucal, son of Eleazar, I am much bounden to thee for the great kindness which thou hast this day shown to my household and to me who am but a fisherman of Galilee. May Jehovah bless thee, for thou art a just man and of great mercy.

Ucal: I pray thee, young man, that thou speak not of this favor. From henceforth thou shalt be to me as a son and I will be to thee as a father. Peace to thee.

Adina: Why dost thou not laugh with joy as I do, my Simon?

Deborah: We will prepare us a feast and make merry.

Adina (*peering anxiously into Simon's face*): My husband, why art thou so grave? Is not this indeed the fulfilling of thy dream?

Simon (*looking down at her gravely but lovingly*): Aye, little wife, thy uncle hath made me an offer that exceedeth the wildest longings of yesterday.

Adina: Then why dost thou not lift up thy countenance unto gaiety?

Simon (*looking down at her*): I cannot become a merchant. The Master hath called me.

Ucal (*sharply*): Master? What master?

Simon: The Nazarene.

Ucal: That magician?

Simon: He is not a magician.

Ucal: He hath tricked thee with the fish.

Simon: Nay, it was not a trick.

Magdala: Simon, thou art mad to turn thee away from the good Ucal's kindness.

Deborah: It is some sorcery that hath got him.

Ucal (*shaking his head wisely*): Aye, I feared the fellow was a sorcerer. It is the menace of this city. From Egypt and India they flock to this city with their strange devices to trick and deceive. This Nazarene hath picked up some wizardry by which he hath upset thy reason, my good Simon.

Simon: Nay, sir, I have never thought more clearly nor more reasonably.

Ucal: It was clear to me from the first how the trick with the fish was done. Thou thyself didst say that at times quantities of fish come close to the shore and are to be caught by casting the net. Now, this sorcerer saw the fish approaching, but he put his eye of evil upon thee and didst keep thee and thy companions absorbed in his stories

until of a sudden he gave command to cast thy net and then the fish seemed to thee, bewitched as thou wert, to be *his* doing.

Simon: Nay, good Ucal, the fish were of a multitude never seen before.

Magdala: Perchance, Simon, in thy excitement thou didst see more than were in the net.

Simon: Nay, nay, I tell thee it is not the *fish*; it is the *man*.

Ucal: Who is this man that he can give thee a better chance to use thy gift than I can?

Simon: I know not, but I *think* he is a king.

Ucal: A king?

Deborah (*shaking her head*): It is sorcery. Alas!

Magdala (*sharply*): Simon! Thou art out of thy mind.

Adina (*gently*): Where wilt thou go with him, my Simon?

Simon: That I know not, Adina, but one thing I do know—there is a deeper meaning to my desire than I knew of when I spake with thee.

Adina: What was it he said to thee?

Simon: That I should fish for men. It is something greater than the swaying them to the purpose of my own wealth.

Adina: Couldst thou not be a merchant and yet listen to the Teacher's words?

Ucal: Nay. He cannot be merchantman of mine if he consort with them that have familiar spirits. The hand of Jehovah hath ever been heavy against such as practice sorcery.

Deborah (*with a despairing cry*): Simon, thou *wilt* not leave us to our poverty?

Magdala: *Think*, lad, what thou doest.

Adina: What doth thy *heart* say, Simon?

Simon (*his eyes uplifted and speaking with a ringing voice*): I will follow him.

CURTAIN

ACT TWO

SCENE I

Scene: *The same.*

Time: *Several months later.*

As the curtain goes up, UCAL is seen coming slowly down stairway. His head is bowed and his attitude one of despondency. He stumbles front.

A SERVANT, dressed in brown, bustles down the stairs carrying vials and a roll of sheepskin. He crosses and goes out gate.

Enter, down stairway, AGUR, a Hebrew Physician. He is an old man with a long white beard. He is dressed handsomely and descends with a firm and dignified step. He glances at UCAL and an expression of sympathy crosses his face but, with something almost like a shrug, he crosses upstage as if to go out gate without speaking. UCAL turns and lays his hand on his shoulder.

Ucal: O Agur, thou physician of excellence, hast thou aught of hope to speak to me concerning my sister Deborah?

Agur: Ucal, son of Eleazar, the hand of Jehovah is heavy upon thy sister Deborah. At the falling of eventide, her spirit will depart. My medicines can avail her nothing now.

Ucal (*pleading*): Agur, canst thou not *even* avail that the light come again into her eyes and she know me and give me her blessing before she depart hence forever?

Agur: Nay, brother, with this fever they slip silently into the land of Sheol without again regaining the remembrance of those about them.

Ucal (*beating his breast*): Alas! Alas! That words of harshness should have been the last she should ever hear from me. Agur, canst thou not call her spirit back for *one instant* of time?

Agur: Nay, friend, it is beyond the power of man.

Ucal (*clutching him*): It was about the young man, Simon, the husband of her daughter, that I spake harshly to her. He opposed me in a matter of business and, though my sister believed the right was with me, yet her heart clave to the young man and she refused to leave his dwelling and come with me. I was angered against her and shook off the dust of this house from my feet, (*voice breaking*) and

now she is dying. (*He covers his face with his hands. AGUR looks on pityingly. At last UCAL raises his head.*) But the damsel, Agur? What doeth the little damsel, her daughter?

Agur: She riseth not from the floor beside the bed of her mother except to go to the housetop and look off over the hills. I think she longeth for the return of her husband. She seemeth possessed with the idea that if he and some companion of his would return her mother would be well. It is very pitiful, for, I tell thee, Ucal, there is no hope. (*Enter, by gate, MAGDALA. She is dressed gorgeously, as before, but now her dress is brilliant blue with a striped undergarment of coral color. AGUR sees her and starts, averting his face. He bows hastily to UCAL, and avoiding MAGDALA pointedly, goes out quickly through the gate. MAGDALA stands looking after him with a scornful and bitter smile.*)

Magdala (*in a hard voice to UCAL*): So! The good Deborah is dying? (*UCAL nods his head sadly.*) Well, she hath had an evil, hard life.

Ucal: Who art thou, Mary of Magdala, to speak of her thus? She was a virtuous woman.

Magdala (*with terrible bitterness*): Aye, and hath had an evil, hard life of it, while I, who am an evil woman, have a gay life. (*She looks at him defiantly.*)

Ucal: Thou shalt be recompensed for it hereafter.

Magdala: If there *be* a hereafter, but of *that* what surety have we? Mayhap this life is all, and the poor Deborah hath had her pains and her virtue for naught.

Ucal: Thou shalt not blaspheme here, Magdala—here in the presence of death.

Magdala: I do not blaspheme, Ucal. I pray the good Deborah *may* get her reward, but I think there is a strong likelihood that this life is all, and that it is *now* or *never* if one would make merry. (*She stands looking at UCAL in defiant hardness and bitterness. He stands shaken and at a loss to answer her. Enter down stairway, ADINA. She runs down halfway, dressed all in white. She peers down and calls in excited manner.*)

Adina: O uncle, *he is coming*. From the housetop, I see him.

Ucal (*pityingly*): *Who cometh*, my daughter?

Adina: The Master. He will lay hands upon my mother and she will recover. (*She runs lightly up the stairway.*)

Ucal (*his eyes meeting MAGDALA in sympathy*): Alas! Alas! This false hope will be the damsel's undoing. I fear me for her life if her mother die.

Magdala (*her face hard again*): If Jehovah live, then is he cruel as the Zeus that my Pandira prays to that he torture with grief that sweet damsel.

Ucal (*sternly*): Woman, the ways of Jehovah are past finding out.

Magdala: Aye. I know they are. That is the reason I gave up trying to please him. (*Ucal puts up his hand in protest, but he is too sad to expostulate. MAGDALA'S face is bitter and defiant. Slowly a golden light appears at the top of the stairs, faint at first and growing brighter till it floods the stairway. UCAL and MAGDALA see it and draw back in terror. They clutch one another and stand gazing fascinated at the light which rapidly becomes a blinding flood.*)

Magdala (*in a shriek of agony*): Ucal! I am afraid! What is it? (*UCAL stands holding her, wide-eyed but not speaking. Suddenly DEBORAH is seen at the head of the stairs. She wears no head-dress and her brown hair is bound about her head. She runs lightly down the stairway, strangely young and full of vigor.*)

Ucal (*in a hoarse whisper*): It is her spirit.

Deborah (*crossing with outstretched hand*): Ucal! My brother! Thou hast come.

Magdala (*in a ringing voice*): Nay, it is her very self! Deborah! It is thou.

Deborah (*matter-of-fact tone*): And why should it *not* be myself? Are all in this house beside themselves? Andrew and Simon have come a long journey and the Master is with them and they are an hungered. Adina doth naught but sit upon the floor with tears streaming down her face kissing the feet of the good Jesus. Meantime he is weary and hath had no food. I, alone, will minister to his need. (*She turns toward house.*)

Ucal (*huskily*): Deborah, dost thou not know? Thou wast ill.

Deborah (*turning a bewildered look on him*): Why, so I was! (*She puts hand to head.*) Here I am without my veil! I do remember me the fever.

Magdala: Deborah, what happened?

Deborah (*still with look of amazement on face*): I know not—except

the Master was kneeling on the floor beside me and he took my hand and I arose.

Ucal: I was but *now* by thy side and thou didst not *know* me and thou wast *wasted* with the fever.

Deborah: Aye, I do remember me the weakness—but—there is no weakness now. (*She looks at them in delighted surprise. As she stretches out her arms, her face becomes radiant with joy as she realizes her strength.*) Why! Ucal! I am alive as never before. It is as if a great fountain of life were let loose within me. (*She stands looking up with arms outstretched as the curtain goes down slowly to show passage of the night.*)

SCENE 2

Scene: *The same.*

(*DEBORAH, ADINA and MAGDALA are seen when curtain rises. DEBORAH wears a dark blue mantle and a white head-dress. As the curtain goes up, she crosses and places a copper jar on the step by the tree. ADINA stands left watching her with quiet joy. MAGDALA stands by the gate peering out.*)

Time: *Morning of the next day.*

Magdala: The sun is terrible. The people will weary if he come not soon.

Adina: Jehovah grant that Peter find him upon the mountain.

Magdala: Peter?

Adina (*smiling*): That is his new name—Simon's. Didst thou not know that the Master hath given him a new name?

Magdala: What significance hath it?

Adina (*proudly*): It meaneth *rock*.

Magdala (*laughing, stopping, then laughing again*): Rock? Thy Simon a rock?

Adina: Why not?

Magdala: Well, if I had the naming of him, I should call him the Waterspout! Thou knowest, little Adina, that thy husband is sudden and changeable. *Tremendous*, he might be, I can fancy, but steady, like a rock—or firm—no, Adina, thy friend Jesus doth not understand Simon, the son of John, if he name him the Rock. (*She peers out of gate. ADINA runs and flings open the gate.*)

Here cometh thy uncle Ucal. *He is the one I should call the rock.*
(*Enter UCAL, bearing two rich caskets in his hand.*)

Ucal (*coming downstage and setting caskets on steps*): My sister, what meaneth the great throng that is about thy dwelling? The whole city waiteth in the glare of the morning without thy gate. It was all I could do to force my way through the crowd.

Deborah: They wait for the Master. (*Her whole bearing and manner of speaking have changed since the first act. There are strength and hope and confidence in her attitude and she looks younger.*)

Ucal: Then the rumor of thy healing hath spread throughout the city?

Deborah: Not only mine, Ucal, but that of scores of others—cripples and blind—whom he healed last even. Standing upon our outer stairway far into the night, he healed all who were brought to him. He was weary from his long journey, but he would not rest. The food I prepared for him he ate standing while he ministered to the wretched ones who pressed about him.

Ucal (*gravely*): It is past understanding, but where is he this morning? I saw many rich litters as I made my way through the throng. Great ones of the city are out there in the street, mighty men of standing and of wealth.

Deborah (*crossing and peering anxiously through slats of gate*): Aye. I would that the Master would come. It will hurt his cause if the people grow weary. There are many out there who could be of great assistance to him once they become convinced that he is worthy—if he show them a mighty wonder.

Ucal: Where is he?

Adina: That we know not, uncle. Late last even, after the last poor wretch had gone shouting from him—O uncle, the sights we beheld; the delirium of joy of those who *saw* for the first time, of those who *walked*!—after they had all gone, he stretched his mat upon the housetop and slept, as we all did, wearied with the strangeness and excitement of it all. Early this morning, before it was yet light, I was awakened by strange sounds and looking out (*she points to gate*) I saw what thou canst now see—the whole city gathered before our gate. I hastened and waked my Peter and he ran quickly to the housetop to arouse the Master, but he was not there.

Ucal: Gone without a word?

Adina: Aye.

Ucal: Thou knowest not whither?

Adina: Peter and Andrew and the sons of Zebedee have gone to seek him. They think they will find him upon the mountain.

Ucal (*amazed*): Upon the *mountain*? Why should he go *there*?

Adina: It is his custom. Often after a long day of healing, he leaveth his band and goeth off thus alone into the desert-places. Sometimes he spendeth whole nights thus.

Ucal: What for?

Adina: Peter saith they have never dared to ask him, but they *think* he goeth to pray.

Ucal: To *pray*? Why, it is in the synagogue that men *pray*.

Adina: Aye, but he goeth into the mountains.

Ucal: Whole nights, thou sayest?

Adina: Sometimes. Always for hours.

Ucal (*frowning*): Well, no man needeth *hours* to pray in. There is some mystery in this. I will talk with the man. I have brought rich gifts with which to reward him for thy healing, Deborah. (*He nods to caskets.*)

Adina (*touching the caskets curiously and excitedly*): O uncle, I am glad thou hast brought him presents.

Ucal (*peering out gate and speaking with a shade of annoyance*): Strange for him to run away like that. He might have known that the wonders of last night would bring him results. He should *be* here. There are men out there who are not accustomed to stand about in the heat for any one. I saw Jairus and Ethnial and others of like standing. The fellow is a fool to risk losing the interest of such men.

Adina: It is too bad! My Peter was so happy over his great success of last night.

Ucal: Hath he never regretted turning his back on the favor I vouchsafed him?

Adina: Never, uncle. We all believe that this Jesus is a prophet of Jehovah and that great honor will come to Peter through his favor. (*Enter SIMON, through the gate. He wears the regular dress of the Hebrew but it is in great disarray. He holds the gate and turns and shouts outside in a furious voice.*)

Simon: I tell ye he will not come. Ye get nothing for your pains tarrying here. Get ye gone. He cometh *not*. (*Many voices joining in angry protest are heard from without.*) I tell ye he is gone away. He is not

coming back. *Begone.* He cometh not. Ye wait in vain. (*He slams the gate and the murmur as of a multitude is heard. SIMON is flushed and scowling. He strides downstage as if too angry to speak.*)

Deborah: Simon! Where is he?

Simon (*voice hoarse with anger*): Woman, I know not.

Adina: Didst thou not find him?

Simon (*behind shut teeth*): Oh, I found him.

Adina: Where is he?

Simon (*sullenly*): I tell thee I know not. (*He has never spoken thus to her and ADINA'S lip trembles like a child about to cry. SIMON gives himself an angry shake and flings himself upon the lowest step about the tree, slumping over with chin in hand and kicking the stones of the pavement viciously.*)

Adina (*going to him cautiously and speaking gently*): My Peter, tell me what hath angered thee.

Simon: Call me not by that name. My name is Simon.

Adina (*amazed*): Peter!

Magdala (*looking out gate*): They are going. The crowd hath accepted thy gentle invitation, Simon, and are taking themselves off. There goeth the rich Jiphtah with his slaves, and, by Mercury, there is my old husband Paphus. Truly the doings of the Nazarene have made a great stir to have gotten Paphus upon his virtuous Hebrew legs all the way from Magdala. He was ever averse to the heat of the morning, too! There be dark looks and evil mutterings of anger among those mighty men who have humbled themselves to search out a traveling sorcerer. Truly it is a sorry jest that thy Master hath played upon the great of this city!

Simon: Call him not my master.

Deborah (*with a new dignity and authority*): Simon, how canst thou say that? Look at me. Dost thou forget what the Master hath done for Deborah?

Simon (*fiercely*): Aye, but what good will it do him or me if he scorn those who might help him?

Ucal: Young man, when thou hast somewhat recovered thee of thy fierce wrath, we would hear somewhat of thine adventure.

(*MAGDALA looks at SIMON and laughs silently, leaning on the gate.*)

Adina: Aye, Peter, speak to me. (*She kneels beside him.*) O thou whom my soul loveth, thou art not angered with thy Adina?

Simon (*reaching out to stroke her head without looking up*): Nay, nay, my fair one, but the heart of thy Simon is heavy with bitterness and disappointment.

Adina (*softly*): Didst find Jesus?

Simon: Aye, I found him.

Adina: Where is he?

Simon: I tell thee I know not and I care not.

Magdala (*smiling and motioning toward a water-jar on the stairway*): Perchance a draught from the well would somewhat cool the young man's heat. (*She laughs, looking at SIMON'S back.*)

Adina (*rising quickly and fetching the jar which she offers to him held upon her bent arm*): The heat of the sun hath been fierce upon thee and thou art weary with a long climb up the mountain. I pray thee that thou wilt ease thee of thy burning thirst, my husband. (*SIMON rises and without a word drinks long and deeply from the jar as it is held by ADINA on the crook of her elbow.*)

Ucal (*with quiet authority*): Now, Simon, we will hear thee.

Simon: Know then, O Ucal, that a company of us have been following the Nazarene over the hills of Galilee and into the remote regions of Samaria. There we have seen such wonders as have convinced us that this Jesus is indeed a mighty man of power and a prophet of Jehovah. The blind recover sight, the lame walk, and the poor are taught as freely as the rich. We of his band have become filled with a great longing that this Teacher should be known and approved in Capernaum and in Jerusalem where men of learning and influence be. Last even, thou knowest, the fame of him spread—as we had hoped—and this morning, instead of the offscourings and the beggars of the city, I beheld when I looked from the housetop that mighty men of power and of influence had come out to find him. All Capernaum had poured itself out to the humble dwelling of a fisherman to seek Jesus, the Nazarene. “Ah!” I thought, “if they see what *we* have seen! If he do his mighty works here in Capernaum, his power will be established, he will become our nation's leader, and I—I whom he hath named the Rock—I——” Oh, thou knowest, Ucal, the power I feel within me to rule—— I remem-

ber his words when he summoned me to follow him—that from henceforth *I should fish for men*. (*He flings up his head and looks at ADINA.*) Oh, Adina, my heart leaped within me as I thought how I should serve him, how I should execute his judgments and how mayhap it might be even I who should set him upon his throne, the throne of Israel, *he* the righteous one, *he* the favored of Jehovah, the chosen one, and then I turned me from gazing upon the subjects I beheld awaiting him and sought to rouse him from slumber. *He was gone!* Ah, well I knew *where*. Far up the steep sides of the mountain I must toil if I would find him. I summoned Andrew and the sons of Zebedee, and, sore and angry at the trick he had played us, we started our long climb, hallooing as we went. Thou knowest, Adina, how rough the way is. We were cut by stones, we were bruised by brambles, but we pressed on, cursing his folly, yet ever hoping we should find him and get him back before the people should go away in anger. Thou knowest where the cave is with the great rock jutting out, called the Devil's Jaw Bone?

Adina: Why, Peter, that is at the very top of the mountain!

Simon: Aye, it was there that I came upon him suddenly. The sun was just coming up and he sat looking off toward the east as calmly and as quietly as if a whole city were not waiting for him in the plain below. Oh, my wrath kindled against him, as I saw him sitting thus and thought how we had hurried and sweated and wearied ourselves to find him, and fierce words rose to my lips and *then* he turned and looked at me. (*SIMON'S face glows as he recalls the look.*)

Adina: Ah! It is wondrous lovely when he looks at one!

Simon: The words I had thought to speak died on my lips, but I spake sternly nevertheless. I said: "All men seek thee," and he saw that I was displeased. Then I turned and hallooeed to the others and they came scrambling up. We poured out our reproaches upon him, telling him that great men of the city had come out to seek him and that it was wrong of him and foolish not to be girded and ready to take advantage of the help they might be to him.

Ucal: What said he to that, Simon?

Simon: What thinkest thou he said? Oh! My wrath flames up when I think of it! He turned and looked at us, tired and hot and angry as we were, and said: "Let us go somewhere else into the country towns on the other side of this mountain that I may make my procla-

mation in them also, for it was for that I came." With that he arose and started down the mountain *away* from Capernaum!

Adina: *Peter!*

Ucal: What didst thou do—thou and the men with thee?

Simon (*bitterly*): What did they do? Why, they followed him like a lot of silly sheep.

Magdala: And thou?

Simon: I whirled in my anger and I strode down the mountain, leaving him to his folly.

Adina: Simon! thou didst *leave* the Master?

Simon: Well, *some one* had to come back to appease the wrath to them who were waiting here. I tell thee it needeth a man of soft words to speak to an angry multitude—a multitude that hath waited long in patient expectation of one who scorneth them and doth not come.

Magdala: We heard thy soft and winsome words to the multitude as thou didst bang the gate behind thee. (*She laughs.*) I do not think thou didst soften their hearts, Simon. I saw sullen looks and heard growls of anger as the men departed.

Simon (*kicking the stones*): So! He hath turned his back and left me to my ruined hopes.

Ucal: No man turneth away from good fortune without strong reason. Why thinkest thou, Simon, that this Nazarene suffered this great opportunity to slip from his grasp?

Simon: How can I tell? I only know that I am sick at heart at his ingratitude and at his stupidity. It were sorry work serving a master who hath no more soundness of discretion than he hath shown. What boots it that I execute shrewdly for him if he have not the wit to take advantage of my wisdom?

Ucal: Canst thou not think of any reason why he should not desire to face the multitude that sought him this morning?

Simon: I can think of no reason, Ucal. The choicest of the city were at our gate.

Ucal: The man is cunning beyond thy reckoning, Simon.

Simon: What meanest thou, O Ucal?

Ucal: It is plain to me. As I said all along, the fellow is a sorcerer. At eventide, with the dark coming on, he could deceive the poor foolish ones of the city—those silly ones who are ever first to run after any new thing—but, like all evil-doers, he feared the light, and most

of all he feared the keen sight of those who are wise and mighty and not easily tricked by the cheap wonders of the juggler. *He was afraid.* He did well not to face the sort of men who were but now gathered outside that gate. In the little villages, shut off from the world of knowledge, his magic may avail to get him food and shelter till even the foolish folk be no longer blinded and drive him from their towns.

Deborah: Ucal! Look at me. Is it *jugglery* that *I*, who was dying, stand here full of life?

Magdala: And the *light*, Ucal! Thou forgettest the light.

Ucal: Truly, sister, thy recovery is marvelous, yet must thou not forget that Agur, the mightiest physician of Capernaum, was with thee all of yesterday. Perchance his remedies were more potent than even *he* wot of.

Deborah (*with a ringing voice of conviction and confidence*): Nay, Ucal, it was no remedy of a physician that placed within my veins the leaping fire of life I feel. It is like a sweet and magic fountain within me, springing up in vigor and hope and joy. (*Her face is transfigured.*)

Simon: Aye, mother, it is *ever* thus with all he healeth. He is no trickster whatever else he may be. Simple and unwise as he hath shown himself to be, yet hath he within him some strange and mighty power that other men have not. It is a power he can transfer unto another man.

Ucal (*sharply*): What's that?

Simon: It is true, O Ucal. I *know*, for once (*his face glows*) he let me heal a woman.

Adina: *Thou*, Peter?

Simon: Aye, Adina, thy Peter. I have not told thee. It was an old woman—or so she seemed, for she was paralyzed. It was horrible to see her stumping along dragging a useless arm and leg. The Master had been telling us that if we asked anything of the Father (*for so he always speaks of Jehovah*) *we must believe that we have it* and it should be ours. Then the woman came hobbling up and Jesus smiled at me and said: "Heal her, Peter." And I prayed the Father for health for that woman. I prayed as I had never prayed before, and, suddenly—I know not how it was—I *knew that I had it*, the thing I had asked for. I *saw* her straight and strong and well, and

(*he whispered in an awed voice*), behold! I looked upon her and she was healed. (*All but UCAL look impressed.*)

Ucal (*with a shrug*): Bah! The man hath bewitched thee.

Simon: Nay, Ucal, what I know, I know. 'Twas thus the healing came. I did not *wonder*, I did not *hope* the Father would give me healing for that woman, *I knew*. And when I knew, then, on that instant, was she healed.

Magdala (*tense*): If thou askest the Father anything? Did he say *anything*, Simon?

Simon (*face glowing*): Aye, Magdala. He said *anything*.

Magdala (*trembling*): Thinkest thou he meant that one could have forgiveness for the *asking*—forgiveness of sins terrible and black?

Simon: Though thy sins be as scarlet——

Magdala (*wearily*): Oh, I know the words of the Prophet Isaiah, but the interpreters of the law declare that they were not meant for such as I.

Simon: *He* saith that it is not the will of our Father that *one* of his little ones should perish.

Magdala: Not *one*, Simon?

Simon: So he saith, Magdala.

Ucal: Now know I he is no true prophet, for outcasts have ever been condemned by the wrath of Jehovah to everlasting fire.

Magdala: I am heavy with the hideous weight of my sin. (*She buries her face in her hands.*) If my father had lived, I should not now be the evil woman I am.

Simon: The Master saith that *like* as a father pitieth his children, so Jehovah pitieth them that trust him.

Ucal: What foolishness is this? Jehovah doth not pity. Jehovah is a Judge, terrible in his judgment and in his wrath.

Magdala: I know my father would have forgiven me of his great love for me.

Simon: The Master saith that the love of an earthly father doth but faintly shadow forth the great and undying and tender love that Jehovah hath for every one of us.

Magdala (*her voice trembling with wonder*): Jehovah *loving*? O Simon, dost think that *could* be true? Think, think! If the All-Powerful One were *loving* too!

Simon: He saith that God is Love.

Magdala: My life and all that I have would I give to *know* that that is true.

Deborah: If thou hadst felt the leaping power of joy within thy being as I have felt it, then wouldst thou *know* that it is true.

Simon: *He* saith the kingdom of Jehovah is within every one of us and that his kingdom is love.

Magdala: Such words as those thou hast listened to and yet thou leavest him?

Adina: Aye, Peter, how *couldst* thou leave the Master?

Deborah: Thou shouldst be by his side.

Ucal: The man hath shown himself unworthy of Simon's pains.

Simon: Nay, good Ucal, not unworthy—that he will never be.

Ucal: Surely he hath this day shown himself weak and unstable, and far too simple to ever be a leader of our nation.

Simon: Weak he may be and lacking in the wisdom of this world, but unworthy, *never*.

Ucal: Thou doest well to turn thee from a weakling.

Simon: To whom else shall I go? He hath the words of eternal life.

Magdala: Simon, dost thou believe his words are truth?

Simon: Aye, Magdala.

Magdala: Then must I find him.

Deborah: I will go with thee.

Adina (*looking pleadingly at Simon*): *Peter?*

Simon: Aye, aye, we will go too. I will lead ye to the Master. I will show ye the way. In my impatience I left him but now do I see that *because* of his helplessness he hath need of me. Ye women shall minister to him and I—oh, I was foolish to leave him in anger. I should have reasoned with him. I should have pointed out to him quietly the advantages that would come to him if he sought out men of influence and affairs instead of wasting his days on the poor and helpless. In his eagerness to help all that are in sorrow he forgetteth his duty to our nation. I will remind him of it. Why—Adina—(*a sudden light breaks over his face*) it was the very strength he lacketh that he felt in me. I see it now. It was for that very thing he named me Peter. Adina, he needeth me. The Master needeth me. He shall lean upon me and I will sustain him. He shall declare righteousness and I will execute it. I will guide him in wisdom. The power I ever possessed to manage men will I devote to his cause.

I—even I—will establish his kingdom for him. He is worthy to be our King. He is the righteous prophet of Jehovah. In me did he recognize the impregnable rock. He knew my power. He saw my strength. In wisdom did he call me to his service. Before his feet will I hew a way. To the throne of the twelve tribes of Israel will I lead him. I, Peter, shall infuse his weakness with my strength. My counsel shall guide his feet to the throne of David. My firmness shall establish him; my strength shall sustain him. (*He raises his right arm with a gesture of authority.*) I AM PETER, THE ROCK.

CURTAIN

ACT THREE

Scene: *The housetop of a dwelling in Bethany.*

Time: *The evening of the Crucifixion.*

(At the side and rear of this house, there are palms growing which are tall enough to spread over housetop upstage. About this roof is a balustrade formed of rough stones of alternate sizes forming something like a battlement effect. Upstage, R, is an opening in the balustrade where an outside stairway goes down. The stones on either side of stairway are higher, forming an entrance. About the roof, in the openings formed by the low stones, stand one or two copper jars and bowls and other household utensils, including some small Grecian lamps lighted. There are straw mats on the stone floor. The sky is blue-black with stars and a crescent moon. In the distance, the lights of Jerusalem are faintly seen.)

(DEBORAH stands upstage looking off with her back to the audience. She shades her eyes with her hand and peers off, leaning forward anxiously. Suddenly she moves toward stairway and leans over expectantly.)

(Enter, up stairway: UCAL and MAGDALA. UCAL is dressed richly, as before, but both he and MAGDALA look worn and somewhat crumpled. MAGDALA wears a blue mantle and the white veil of the penitent. UCAL assists MAGDALA, who comes front as if spent with weariness. She sinks upon a mat downstage R, UCAL helping her. Then UCAL turns and looks silently at DEBORAH.)

Deborah: It is over? *(UCAL nods sadly.)* Dost thou mean he is dead?

Ucal: Aye, Deborah, Jesus of Nazareth is dead.

Deborah: Then Jehovah be praised that his suffering is past! Was it not sooner than thou didst even hope?

Ucal: Aye. The other poor fellows are still alive.

Deborah: But they were thieves.

Ucal *(with something like sternness in his voice):* Aye, but they suffer. My sister, it is horrible that men should thus torture their fellow men. I have never witnessed a crucifixion before and my soul doth rise within me in protest against such brutal means.

Magdala: It is the lowest death a man can die. Even the Romans do not crucify except a man be a vile and wicked slave. No free man is ever thus tortured and humiliated.

Ucal: It is the blackest stain upon our nation's record that a just man and free should die this evil death.

Deborah: His truth will live.

Ucal (*sadly*): Nay, sister, that is the saddest thing of all. The man was good and doubtless had in mind reforms that would have helped to purify our nation, but he hath died a felon's death and so his teaching is disgraced, his followers are scattered and his life was lived in vain. (*He sighs.*) Well, we have done what we could. (*He sighs.*) Joseph, the Arimathæan, begged his body of Pilate and we have buried it in a new tomb where never man was laid.

Deborah (*thinking*): *Tomorrow* is the *sabbath*, but the first day of the week will we go with spices to his tomb, Magdala.

Magdala: Aye, Deborah, we will arise early and do him that last and loving service.

Deborah: What didst thou mean, Ucal, by saying that his followers were scattered?

Magdala (*with scorn*): All but John left him when he was arrested.

Deborah (*with a cry, looking from one to the other*): Not *Peter*? (*MAGDALA glances at UCAL.*)

Ucal (*clearing his throat several times*): Thou must not be too severe in thy judgment of these young men. Simon, indeed, followed him to the house of Caiaphas, but there he became terrified and fled. It is indeed a dangerous plight these young men find themselves in. Their leader hath been declared a felon by the law and hath died the lowest death a man can suffer. At any moment, his followers may be arrested and condemned as he was.

Deborah: Ah! but to *desert* him!

Ucal: The arrest was sudden and at night. They were all unprepared. Up to the very end, they thought he would set up a *kingdom*.

Deborah: So did we all, alas! A kingdom of righteousness and justice.

Ucal: Deborah, thou knowest I have become convinced of the worth and goodness of this Nazarene, but ever since he drove the traders from the Temple have I known his cause was hopeless. It was a direct attack upon the most valued privilege of the high priest. From that

day Annas hath been unremitting in his zeal for the young man's destruction.

Magdala: He could have *saved* himself, I am convinced.

Ucal: If he could, then why hath he died?

Magdala: Ucal, I know not. There is a deeper meaning to his death than we yet wot of.

Ucal: Mayhap. (*He shakes his head.*) For me, at least, the death of this just man hath a meaning that shall change the thought and conduct of my life.

Deborah: Why, Ucal, how is that?

Ucal (*sternly*): I saw him *beaten*. I saw him *humiliated*. I saw him *faint* under the torture that was inflicted upon him in the name of *justice*, and then—oh—(*he shudders*) I saw his cruel death, and not only his, Deborah, but the others, those worthless ones. I saw *their* agony, an agony no man, however vile, should suffer; and life to me can never be the same. There are wrongs here in this city that must be righted. In dark and lonely dungeons, *my* brothers rot and die. If Jehovah spare *my* life, my wealth, my days and all my influence shall be spent in bringing the sun of justice and mercy to the prisoners in Jerusalem who languish in despair.

Magdala (*as if trying to work something out in her own mind*): Thus through his death shall others *live*.

Ucal: Now, at last, are mine eyes open to the injustice that hath ever been before them. O God, that this just man should die ere I could see my brothers' need!

Deborah (*weeping*): That his sweet life is done! O God, this cruel world! O base ingratitude, that those he loved should flee from him! O Peter! Peter! Thou whom he did name *the rock*! Thou weak and fearful boy! Alas, Adina's heart will break!

Magdala: Where is the little maid?

Deborah: Searching for her love. I could not stay her when the tidings came that the Master had been arrested. She was beside herself for Peter's life and all this day hath she sought tidings of her husband.

Ucal (*looking down stairway and speaking low*): Even now she cometh.

Deborah (*clutching Magdala*): Oh, tell not of the young man's cowardice. She hath ever loved him for his courage.

Ucal (*hurriedly*): They were all panic-stricken and knew not what they

did. No man shall condemn another, for, in such a case, he knoweth not himself what he would do.

Magdala: Yet didst not thou fear to stay. O *slaves and cowards!*

Ucal: I was in no danger. My position and my standing did protect me. They were all strangers in the city with nowhere to flee for safety. (*Enter: ADINA. She looks white and spent.*)

Adina (*anxiously to DEBORAH*): Hath he yet returned? Hath my Peter come?

Deborah (*gently*): Not yet, my daughter.

Adina: O uncle, hast thou *seen* him, hast thou *seen* my husband?

Ucal (*kindly*): Nay, child, but he will come.

Adina: O Ucal, dost thou *think* he will? *Magdala*, hast *thou* not seen him? (*MAGDALA shakes her head.*) All the long night, in terror did I wait, and all the long day have I searched the streets of Jerusalem but no man hath tidings of my husband.

Ucal (*laying his hand on her head*): My child, in his good time, thy husband will return to thee. Meantime, my little one, thou must rest and eat, for thou art spent with thy anxiety.

Deborah (*eagerly*): Aye. Food have I prepared. Ye must all partake of it, for ye are weary with the long and dreadful vigil.

Ucal (*following DEBORAH to stairway*): Aye, Deborah, we will eat. Come. (*He motions to the others.*) Come, Magdala. Come, my daughter.

Magdala (*shaking her head*): Nay, good Ucal, I cannot eat.

Adina (*to DEBORAH*): Go, my mother, and serve my uncle Ucal. Suffer me to abide with Magdala. I want no food. I cannot bear the house, tonight.

Deborah: My child——

Adina: Nay, mother, leave me. I cannot breathe within the narrow walls tonight.

Magdala: Aye, let her rest her here.

Deborah: I will bring food and set it there upon the parapet. (*She points R.*) There shalt thou find it when thy hunger calls. (*DEBORAH and UCAL go down stairs. ADINA wanders up-stage and stands looking off toward Jerusalem. Suddenly she turns to Magdala.*)

Adina: Why, Magdala, thou *must* have seen my Peter. Thou wast with Jesus to the end?

Magdala: To the end.

Adina: Where was my Peter? *Magdala!* Thou art keeping something from me! *(She clutches MAGDALA'S shoulder.)* Is my husband dead?

Magdala: Nay, nay. He liveth. I know.

Adina: Then hast thou seen him. *Where* didst thou see him, Magdala?

Magdala *(hastily and guiltily)*: Nay, nay, I saw him not. *(She sees the doubt and fear in ADINA'S face which she presses close to MAGDALA.)* How can I tell whom I saw in all that wild and hurried mass? O child, if thou hadst been there and hadst *seen* the Master chained to the cruel pillar in Pilate's courtyard and hadst *seen* those brutes of Romans who flung upon his naked back their weighted whips—oh! *(She shudders and falls to moaning.)*

Adina *(voice breaking)*: My Peter is dead. Such affront to our Master would he never suffer and live. *(She bends over, weeping silently, then turns to MAGDALA again and speaks in a childish whimper.)* Dost thou think he is dead, Magdala?

Magdala: Nay, he liveth.

Adina *(coming close and sitting on her heels beside MAGDALA)*: How dost thou know, Magdala, if thou didst not *see* him?

Magdala: Perchance I did see him. I do not remember.

Adina: Why, Magdala, thou couldst not have forgot my Peter if thou hadst seen him. *(MAGDALA does not answer. ADINA looks at her expecting some reply.)* And at the burial, Magdala? But now, the wife of Alphæus did tell me how my uncle Ucal and the good Nicodemus helped thee to take him from the cross and that Ucal was with thee, sustaining thee, when they carried his body to the sepulchre. Where was my Peter then?

Magdala: I have told thee, Adina, I do not know.

(ADINA wanders upstage and looks off. After a moment she turns.)

Adina: But last even, Magdala, when the Master was arrested? Thou *saidst* thou wast in the courtyard of Caiaphas. Didst thou not *see* Peter, *then*?

Magdala *(her face grows hard as she remembers PETER'S treachery. She starts up as if to blurt out the truth, but as she sees the childish face bent over hers, she sinks back.)*: I do not remember.

Adina *(staring front with her hands clasped)*: Then is my Peter dead,

or what I fear me most, chained in some dungeon where he is impotent to give his life for the Master.

Magdala: Nay, Adina, there were none arrested save Jesus only.

Adina (*solemnly*): Then is he dead. (*She stands a moment silent, then seeming to feel some doubt in MAGDALA, she speaks with dignified reproach.*) If thou didst know the heart of my beloved as I know it, Magdala, then wouldst thou be assured that no man could lay hands on Jesus save over Peter's body slain. (*She wanders upstage and sinks, weeping, her head buried in her arms and her arms on the balustrade. Silence. She lifts her head to the sky.*) Oh, that I could but know where thy body lieth! (*She rises.*) My Peter! My Rock! That some one who saw thee fall could tell me of thy sweet courage! (*She stands with hands clasped straining her eyes to heaven, facing R.*)

(*Enter SIMON, crawling up stairway. He is covered with mud and his garments hang wet and draggled about him. His head is crouched into his neck, his shoulders bent and his whole appearance that of misery and despair. ADINA sees him as he slouches past her and starts in alarm.*)

Adina: Oh! Who art thou? (*She peers after him as he turns away his head.*) Peter! (*Her voice is wild with joy as she runs to him.*)

Simon (*sinking in a heap on floor L.*): Come not nigh unto me.

Adina: O my love, thou art not dead!

Simon (*recoiling from her*): Do not touch me. (*He flings himself prone upon the floor.*)

Adina (*bending over him*): Thou art wounded, O my husband.

Simon (*shrinking away from her touch*): Touch me not. I am accursed.

Adina (*kneeling beside him*): My beloved, thou art beside thyself with sorrow.

Simon: I am drunk with guilt. (*He shudders and a great groan escapes him.*)

Adina: Guilty? (*Tenderly.*) How couldst thou save him? Thou alone? It was the will of Jehovah, my beloved. What could man avail? (*She starts to lay her hand on his shoulder.*)

Simon (*drawing away*): Thou shalt never touch me again, thou pure child of God. Fly from me, for I am evil!

Adina: Softly, my Peter, thou art crazed with grief. Thy garments

are soaked with the rain and thou art weak for lack of food. Thou must eat.

(DEBORAH enters from stairway and places a bowl upon the parapet R. She exchanges a look with MAGDALA, nods toward PETER and then slips down the stairs in silence.)

Simon *(his head hidden in his arms)*: My tears have been my meat day and night.

Adina *(tenderly)*: Peter, I loved him too. I did not see his cruel death, but here in my heart a weight of agony doth bear me down, yet must we live.

Simon: O God, that I could die!

Adina *(softly)*: Jehovah did not suffer thee that thou shouldst die with him. Comfort thine heart, my beloved. Dost fear thy Adina doubts that thou wouldst gladly give the last drop of thy blood in his defense? *(A low moan of agony from SIMON.)* Lift up thy head, my husband. Comfort the heart of thy wife with the tale of the struggle and of thy courage. Speak to me, Peter—Peter, my Rock.

Magdala: Child, thou wilt slay him.

Adina *(aside to Magdala)*: Nay, Magdala, I do but seek to rouse him. If he speak not, his heart will break.

Simon *(raising his head)*: Now is it broken. *(He draws away from her and looks at her with terrible intent.)* I was afraid.

Adina *(not understanding)*: Afraid?

Simon: Curse me and go thy way. Seek not to look upon my face. In his hour of need, I was consumed with fear for my own worthless life and I forsook him.

Adina *(tenderly)*: He raveth, Magdala. My poor Peter, what shall I do?

Simon *(with a groan)*: I did deny that I had ever known him.

Adina *(a terrible fear dawning)*: Magdala!

Magdala *(rising and taking her tenderly in her arms)*: My child, this is the cup the Father hath given thee and thou must drink it.

Adina *(with a cry)*: Magdala, I cannot drink it. *(She seizes MAGDALA, crying in a sharp voice.)* Tell me it is not true. *(There is a long and tense silence in which ADINA stretches out her arms first to SIMON, then to MAGDALA, who turns away her face. As neither looks at her, she gives a heartbroken cry.)* O God! He is a coward. *(She flings herself sobbing on the floor.)*

Simon (*in a terrible voice of condemnation*): Bread and salt was there between us, yet I did deny him. Oh, that I had slain myself in the cave of Hinnom where I wandered seeking to hide me from my guilty self.

Adina (*lifting her head*): Thou hast been all day in the valley of Hinnom?

Simon: Entreating Jehovah that he would let me die.

Adina (*rising wearily*): Then thou hast had no food. (*She starts as if to go down the stairway, then sees the bowl on parapet. She fetches it and kneels beside him.*) See. Here is meat. Thou art spent and weary. Eat. (*Her voice is dull and lifeless.*)

Simon (*staring at the bowl but not appearing to notice it*): Three times, with heavy oath, I did fling out that I had never known him.

Adina: Eat.

Simon: It was a Roman soldier first. That was when he was taken before the high priest. Then, at midnight, one of the officers of the household pointed me out, where I stood hiding behind a pillar, and I did declare that I knew him not. And at the third hour, a serving maid laughed in my face and said she did know by my Galilean speech that I was one of his friends and I did curse and shout that I had never seen the man. It was *then* that he turned and looked at me.

Adina (*holding out the sop to him*): Just this morsel of food.

Simon (*shrinking back in horror*): It was thus, last even, at this very hour, that he did offer me the sop in token of his great love for me. O God, I cannot bear myself. (*He flings himself prone. ADINA presses the sop on him. He shakes his head.*) Nay, I will not eat. (*ADINA sighs and crossing heavily, sets the bowl back on parapet. She returns and kneels beside Simon.*)

Adina: Did ye all eat the Passover together?

Simon: Aye, and such a feast of joy it was! What things he said, Adina! Things that did make our hearts leap within us.

Adina: What things, Simon? (*She is like a woman trying to coax a child. All the child has gone from her.*)

Simon: The things that we should *do*. He *said* far greater things than he had ever done, and the joy that should be ours! (*MAGDALA lifts her head and listens.*) He spake so much of joy, Adina. That now was his joy fulfilled. And such a radiance as was upon his face!

(*His face is transfigured as he remembers.*) And that the *same* joy that was in him, (*he hesitates and speaks in an awed voice*) he said it, that the joy of being in union with the Father should be ours—ours, Adina, as it was his, that the Father was in *us* even as he was in him and that was why we should do greater works than he had done. And he called us *friends*, and said that if we should ask the Father anything in his name he would give it to us. Oh, I see him now as he said: “Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name: ask and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full.” Always he spake of joy and we *knew* that his kingdom was at hand. It was like the glorious entry into Jerusalem when all the people shouted and spread their garments in his path, only it was more beautiful and full of power and confidence. And then he spake of things we did not understand, something about *going away* so that some great power could come to us. And he said that we should behold his glory. Then he spake as if some evil thing were going to happen to him, as if men would be unjust to him and turn away from him, and I, filled with love and loyalty, cried out that if every one in the world should leave him——(*He has risen and his face is illuminated with the blessed memory. Suddenly he comes to himself and his head falls forward with a groan.*)

Adina (*bending over him eagerly*): What then? What said he then, Peter?

Simon (*in a horrified voice*): He said: “Before the cock shall crow twice, thou shalt deny me thrice.” (*With a cry.*) O Adina, *he knew*, even *then*, he knew the blackness of my heart.

Magdala: He knoweth the deepest depths of sin.

Simon: And now he is dead, and I am sick with loathing of myself. (*He springs to his feet, his face drawn with suffering.*) O God, I cannot bear the blackness of my soul.

Adina: Simon, spake he not to thee when he turned his look upon thee in the house of the high priest?

Simon: His *eyes* did speak to me.

Adina: Reminding thee that he had *told* thee thou shouldst betray him?

Simon: Nay, Adina, it was not that his eyes did speak.

Adina: What then?

Simon: I dare not tell thee—yet I *heard* the words—there in the black darkness of my shame, I *heard* the words his eyes spake to my heart.

Adina (*gently*): What did thy heart hear, my Simon?

Simon: All night in the bitter darkness, all day in the cruel light, I have heard them ringing, ringing, ringing. Oh, that I could hide me from their sound!

Adina: Tell me the words, my husband.

Simon: His look was full of sorrow, yet it seemed not pity for *himself* that his own familiar friend in whom he trusted, who had eaten his bread and salt, had lifted up his heel against him. I cannot tell thee how it was, but, swift as an arrow, *my heart* received those ringing words his eyes sent forth. It was as if he said: "Thou art *Peter*, the *Rock*. On *thee* will I build the structure of my Truth." *Those* are the words that mock my weak and ugly soul. (*He stands looking up as if he heard again the words.*) The Rock! On thee will I build the structure of my Truth!

Magdala (*who has listened attentively*): When my black and hideous sin did crush me to the earth, he said: "Even *now*, Magdala, there springeth within thee a fountain of pure water that shall cleanse the earth. From thy dark despair shall many rise to hope." Beneath the muddy waters of my life, *he* saw the crystal fountain, and, Peter, through *thy* weakness *he* seeth strength.

Simon (*sadly*): A woman, thou, and yet thou didst not leave him. Thou wast brave and loyal to the end.

Magdala: Yet have I been disloyal to every tie that bindeth a woman's heart.

Simon: Oh, the mockery of his look!

Adina: I cannot *think* of Jesus' face with *mockery* upon it.

Simon: Nay, Adina, the mockery is in my shameful heart.

Magdala: How *looked* he when those words shot from his eyes?

Simon: Magdala, it was as if he said: "Thou wilt suffer, Peter, for thou hast done a shameful thing, but in thy dark despair *forget not* thou art the Rock on which the building of my Truth shall rise."

Adina (*quietly as if puzzling it out*): Thou art the Rock.

Magdala: Simon, it was thou thyself that didst first tell to me *he* said that God is love.

Simon: There is no love in all the universe to forgive such sin as mine.

Adina (*staring at him, then reaching out her arms to him in sudden joy*): Yet *I*, who am but a foolish girl, have love enough!

Simon (*sadly*): Dost thou not hate me, Adina?

Adina: Nay, Peter, I hate thee not. When first I knew thy cowardice, I thought my love had died, but, when I saw thy need of food—not knowing what I did—I arose and brought thee meat, and, *in the bringing*, I did know I loved thee still.

Simon: Yet thou didst ever scorn a coward.

Adina: 'Tis not the coward in thee I love.

Simon (*bitterly*): 'Tis all there *is* of me.

Adina: Nay, Peter, else could I not love thee still.

Simon: Thou *canst* not love me, Adina. I am too vile.

Adina (*simply*): Nay, but I do.

Simon: In all the world there is no baseness like unto mine. He was my friend and I did love him. (*He breaks down weeping.*) O God, that I could die!

Magdala (*with sudden understanding*): Yet must thou live and teach his Truth.

Simon: *I?* I, teach? I who am the utter fool of all the earth?

Magdala: Still shalt thou fish for men.

Simon: If thou hadst ever suffered, woman, thou couldst not mock me thus.

Magdala: I mock thee not, Peter. 'Tis only those who suffer that God doth set to fish for men.

Simon: I am so weak, so utterly degraded, that there is left to me no single gift that I should speak to men.

Magdala: 'Tis only when the flood doth sweep away the props of thy self-love that thou canst find the *secret* strength.

Simon: Oh, that I could find refuge from my sin, that I could flee away from the meanness of my soul!

Magdala: Knock, Peter. The door will open.

Simon: What door?

Magdala: Behind the wall of every life, *he* standeth. *He* looketh forth at the windows. *He* showeth himself at the lattice.

Simon (*with eager humility*): Thinkest thou, Magdala, there is some secret source of strength that can infuse my weakness?

Magdala: Peter, I *know* there is. (*Her voice rings with faith and understanding.*) 'Twas for that very thing he came, that *life* should be *to us* in greater fullness.

Simon (*humbly*): O Magdala, what *is* that source?

Magdala: It is the source that Jesus sought.

Simon (*a gleam of memory coming into his dull eyes*): Ah! *That* was why he climbed the mountain top!

Magdala: Dost not remember, Simon, oft when we questioned him, he said: "It is not I—it is the Father within me that doeth the works"?

Simon (*slowly*): "I of myself can do nothing." Those were his words.

Magdala: 'Tis ever thus with every child of God.

Simon: But, Magdala, I am so vile. Thinkest thou his tabernacle can ever be builded in *me* again?

Magdala: It will be builded with *joy*, and in thee shall he make *glad* those that are captive to despair.

Simon: I of myself can do nothing. O God, I know it now. I am empty and undone. Within my worthless self is there *no* good. The Rock I *thought* to build the Master's kingdom on hath crumbled into dust. Worthless and undone, shall Jehovah speak his Truth through *me*? Oh, Magdala, I *dare* not hope.

Magdala: 'Tis only the empty vessel that God *can* fill.

Simon (*standing with arms outstretched and speaking in a voice of tense entreaty*): I am empty: Jehovah *fill* me. I am weak. O Master, *give me strength*. (*He stands a moment, his face strained with longing. Suddenly a light breaks over it and great joy comes upon him.*) O God, what flame of fire is this I feel within my veins? (*With a ringing shout.*) *It is eternal strength!* O Friend, in *me* shall thy truth live! O Jesus—Master—at last, I *understand*, I am Peter, *the Rock*.

CURTAIN

COSTUMES FOR AMATEURS TO MAKE

The suggestions for costumes and scenery were made by committees having these matters in charge when "The Rock" was first produced by the Pilgrim Players of Evanston, Illinois.

The illustrations of Tissot are, of course, the truest studies of the various types of people to be found in the Holy Land, and the second volume of the Tissot Bible, entitled "The Life of Our Saviour, Jesus Christ," will be found invaluable. A book which will be found helpful not only to the costume committee, but for general information, is "Bible Manners and Customs," by Rev. G. M. Mackie, M.A.

There are three garments worn by the men of Palestine. The long straight one-piece undergarment or shirt is worn by all, and for the man who works out-of-doors under the sun's rays is considered sufficient. The merchant, or the man of the town, wears a coat over this, which is the same length as the shirt, but open down the front. This is tighter fitting than the third garment, the cloak, and is girdled at the waist. The girdle is so folded to be of use as a pocket, so when the coat is not worn the shirt is sometimes girded. The outer robe or cloak is very loose and ample as to sleeves and is worn without belt or sash. The material is generally woolen cloth. One common form of this garment for wear in the country and villages and by travelers is the large square coat. This is very striking when woven in black and white or other stripes. The women wear long, loose robes, loose sleeves, often pointed, and in public places, at any rate, the head and shoulders are covered with a shawl or mantle. Turbans of folds of white cotton cloth or colored silk are also worn.

SIMON PETER—Act One: Sleeveless shirt made of coarse, unbleached crash toweling, left raveled at the bottom. A gay sash wound around the waist held the skirt short so that his limbs were bare from the knees down. His head was covered with a square of gayly-striped cotton material, which was folded diagonally and arranged over the head and shoulders and held in place with coils of bright green material. Act Two, Scene 2: A coat of cotton material, narrowly striped, in dark blue and white; same head covering as Act One. Act Three: Same as Act Two, but in addition he has thrown over his shoulder a straight cloak of wide stripes, made by stitching strips of flannel together. This was brown and gray.

Instead of the head covering of the earlier scenes he wore a small, round cap bound about with coils of dark blue. Peter should be made up with a close cropped beard of dark brown, and should have the bronzed appearance of an out-of-door man.

UCAL—The same costume throughout. Coat of old gold jute material found in a drapery department, it had a mercerized surface and suggested silk. It was woven in self-colored stripes and when deeply fringed at the bottom and trimmed gayly it gave a rich appearance. The parting of the coat in front and the swaying of the fringe exposed a decorated undergarment. On his head was a high, conical cap, bound about with a silk square folded. Upon his entrance in Act One his tallith, or prayer cloth, was over his head and a cloak of wide stripes, old gold and maroon, hung from his shoulders. This was made of some old rep *portières* and canton flannel. The trimming of the coat to simulate embroidery was done by sewing *motifs* of gold embroidery, found in a trimming box, over bright pieces of satin. Trimming of many colors was used for the neck and down the front. The unbleached-muslin undergarment was decorated with oil paints. He was made up with a brown beard.

PANDIRA—A Greek chiton of soft green stenciled in gold. Over his shoulder a chlamys of yellow and a narrow fillet of yellow. The chiton was unbleached muslin dyed and the chlamys was heavy-weight Japanese crêpe.

TITUS—Roman tunic of unbleached muslin, edged at bottom with purple sateen. An old derby hat, brim removed, served as the basis for his helmet; the rest of it and the armor were made of oil cloth painted with aluminum radiator paint. This armor is only satisfactory for a character having a small part. Rented armor is the only kind that looks like the real thing. Titus should also have a sword and a mantle draped from his shoulder.

AGUR—Purple cotton crêpe coat, worn over an unbleached muslin undergarment. His coat was trimmed with a wide-striped braid of several colors. He wore a cap around which was coiled folds of heavy-striped silk. He also had a sash of ample proportions. It had once been a striped silk curtain, but it was just the thing to give the doctor an important appearance. He was made up with a gray beard.

ADINA—Act One: Sky-blue Japanese crêpe robe with long, pointed sleeves. Sash of soft yellow. Mantle of sand color, edged with blue somewhat darker than the dress. She wore beads around her neck and ankles.

The mantle was of a soft, but heavy, cotton material, and the blue band was scrubbed in with oil paints. Adina also had a costume of white cotton crêpe, with white mantle, for the first scene of Act Two and Act Three.

MARY OF MAGDALA—Act One: Lavender china silk, over which hung a flame-colored silk mantle. The mantle was also made of several pieces of old faded silk dyed with a mixture of turkey red and orange. Cheap gilt fringe edged the mantle. It was also elaborately trimmed with imitation jewels and glistening glass bugles. Around her head she wore a band of coarse lace gilded and jeweled. Around her breast she wore a wider band similarly made and around her waist was a metal girdle of gold appearance. Act Two: A striped near-silk material, rose, purple and sand colored. Same girdle, and head band. Sand-colored mantle of silk veiling. Act Three: White cotton crêpe robe simply girdled. White cheesecloth folds about face, and large mantle of dark blue cotton crêpe. This mantle was much more colorful, and not so dark as a navy blue. In the subdued light of the last scene, a navy blue would have had the appearance of black. A careful draping of the mantle is particularly necessary in this scene.

DEBORAH—Act One: Robe included purple and terra cotta, with soft green, and the same green for the mantle. This was striped and had a yoke effect. To lend dignity to this character, white folds may be used about the face. DEBORAH used the same white costume worn by MAGDALA in the last scene for Act Two, Scene 1. In the latter part of Act Two she wears a blue mantle.

SERVANTS wore the straight undergarments, with girdles of cotton-striped material. Their head coverings were similar to Peter's in Act One. Sandals, which were worn by all of the performers, were made of old bedroom slippers or felt soles bought at the Ten-Cent Store and fastened on with strips of leather. The ankles should be bare. The servants may go barefooted. The beards were made of crêpe hair which is bought by the yard at the costumers. It is applied with spirit gum and removed with alcohol.

SCENERY USED IN THE FIRST PRODUCTION OF "THE ROCK"

In the original production of this play the scenery was prepared entirely by amateurs of high-school age without any professional assistance. Moreover, the conditions were unusually difficult, as there was no regular stage with walls and wings, and nothing but three crossbeams and the air from which to hang the set. So no amateur need be discouraged from production by fear of its difficulty.

The performance was given in the church auditorium on the pulpit stage. First of all a huge curtain, 20 by 60 feet, in three sections, was made of unbleached muslin and hung at the back to cut off the organ, and form an outdoor background. In order to save expense (the professional dyer wanted \$20.00 to dye this curtain), this was dyed by one of the boys, a beautiful Maxfield Parrish blue. The unevenness inevitable in so large a job rather added to the effect, as the mottled white spots created a charming effect of clouds. The three sections of the curtain were clamped together with large clasps, a deep hem being left as joining and tall uprights, twenty feet high, slipped inside the hem for supports and to avoid a wrinkled sky. As the space over the proscenium was very high, a narrow "fly," of the same blue, was used in front of the large background and about over the wall.

Side walls to represent the sides of houses were made from beaver board and calsomined a soft, creamy yellow. These ran to the top, and at the front of the right wall a doorway was made (be sure not to have a door) with a strip of striped awning tacked to the upper doorframe and supported by small sticks, slanted out from the base of the door.

At the back the skeleton framework of a wall, about seven feet high, was covered with khaki. A little to left of center, the boys built an arch of plain boards and a quaint double door fastened with a wooden bolt of elaborate design. The arch of this gateway was particularly effective. These were also calsomined, the arch and frame the same color as the side walls and the door a dark brown.

A flight of four steps was built at the back right, ending in a platform, which turned and went out between the side and back wall, thus obviating the awkward effect of climbing up over the scene; the upper half of the stairway to the roof was finished in the imagination off-stage. A large

packing box in the wings made the landing. The boys also built a similar set of steps to fit around the palm.

An unusually beautiful real palm was secured from the florist and fitted into an artificial trunk containing a bucket of water. This was just the right height to escape the top of the proscenium.

This set remained the same until the last act, when the walls were hurriedly ripped off the beams, and sections previously covered on the back side with khaki were set lengthwise on each side, making the side wall. The gateway was taken out and cleverly made to hinge up and set away, while the back wall, seven feet high, in the first scenes, having been made with hinges, folded over to four feet high, the same as the side walls. An opening was left at the same spot where the stair had gone up in the first act. The best touch of all, however, in securing the effect of the roof was achieved by a very simple use of the palm, which was removed from the trunk and set on the floor just outside the wall. The other trees, which had waved high outside the wall in the first act, were lowered to only just reach the top. It was remarkable what an illusion of being up in the air it created merely to look level on this palm, which in the first act had waved above their heads.

As this scene represents a house roof just outside Jerusalem, a piece of beaver board, the length of the width of the stage, was painted with a scene representing the walls and roofs of the temple. The upper outline was cut out to follow the design and this piece was set up against the dark blue sky curtain, behind the beaver wall.

The lighting of this play is very simple. We used no footlights, but two strips of four 100-Watt nitrogen amber bulbs on each side of the proscenium for the daylight scenes, with two flood lights with eight 75-Watt nitrogen and a blue gelatin slide behind the wall at the gate to light the blue sky background; for the miracle we dimmed the general light a little for contrast and used a baby spot light from the balcony directly onto the platform of the stair. The last act is played in darkness and we had the strips dimmed to almost nothing, one flood taken off its stand on the floor with only two bulbs at the back. On account of the fire laws we were not able to use the Roman lamps, although we had two at hand for use. The blue flood shining on the distant scene of Jerusalem made an impressive effect. A khaki floor cloth gave the effect of the court.

The jars were especially made by a local potter without charge for

the sake of the advertising. They are not baked and are very fragile, but picturesque.

The change of scene was very quickly and quietly made and did not take over seven minutes, although everything on this stage had to be nailed, "unnailed" and nailed up again. The stage is a large one, 15 feet by 25 feet by 15 feet, and the cost of the sets, not counting the labor, which was contributed by the boys, was about \$40.00.

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